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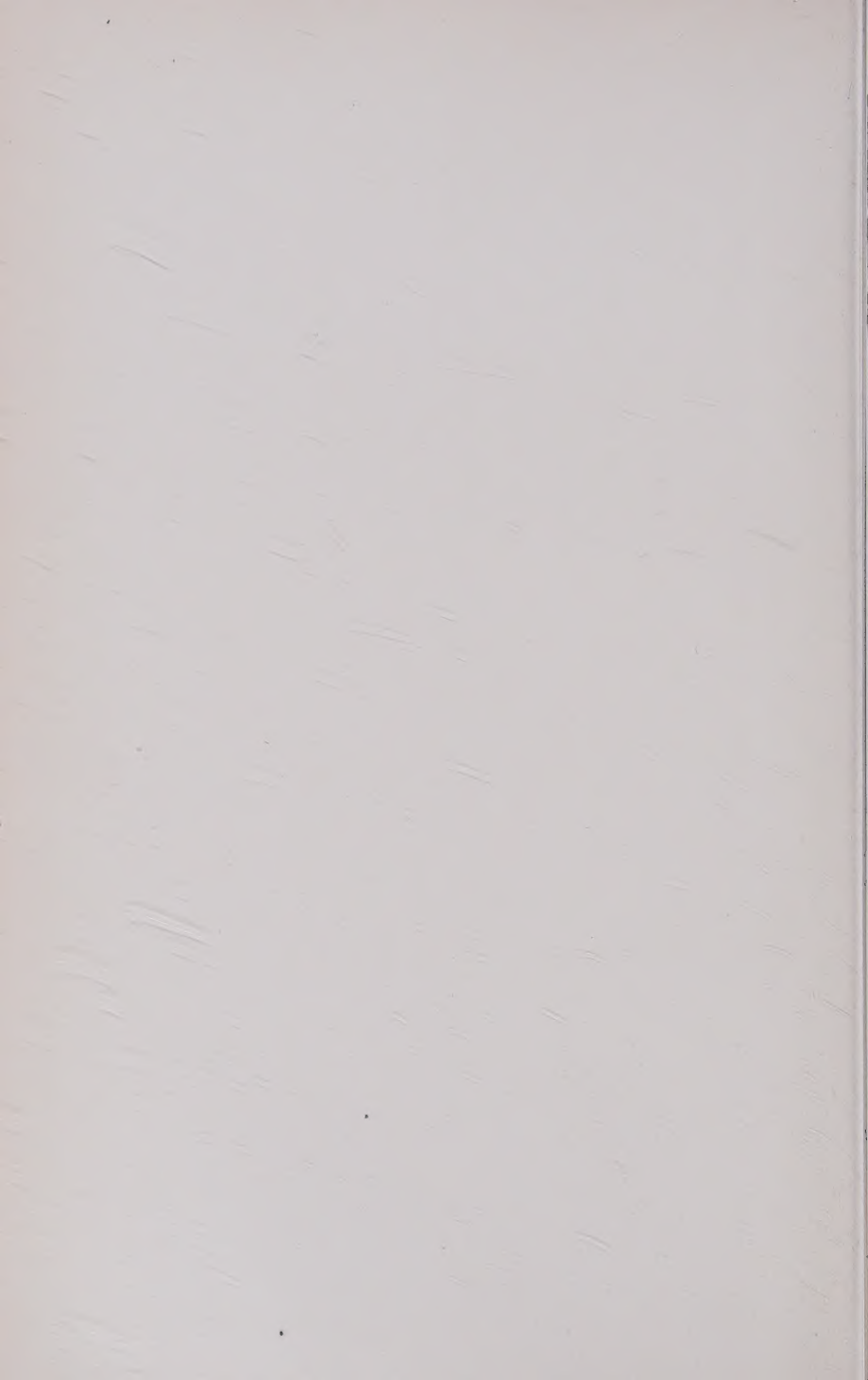
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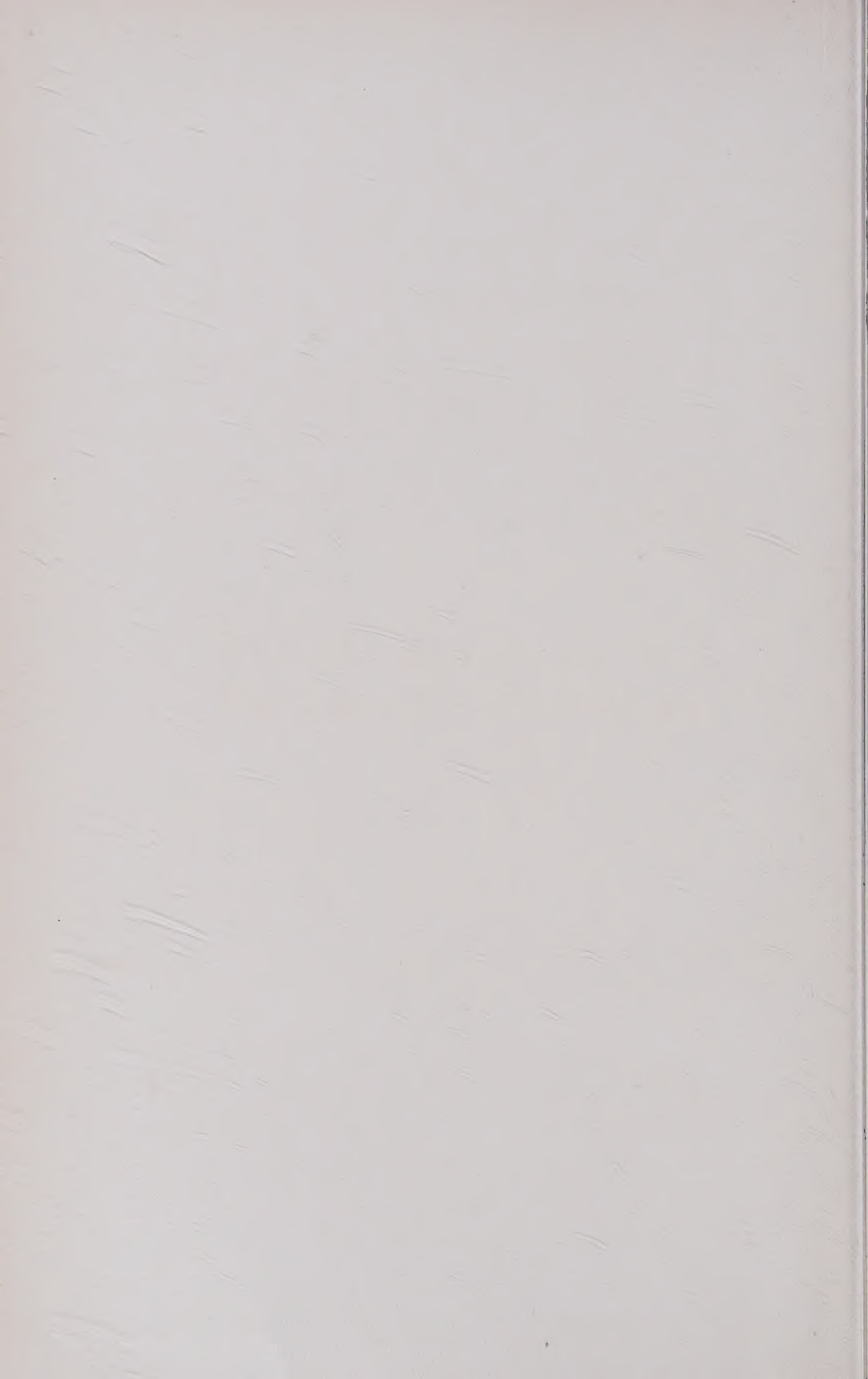
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THE RELIGION OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT



BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament

By PROF. BERNHARD WEISS, Ph.D.,
University of Berlin.

Translations by A. J. K. Davidson

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NEW YORK AND LONDON

The Religion of the New Testament

By

PROFESSOR DR. BERNHARD WEISS

of the University of Berlin

Translated from the German by

PROFESSOR GEORGE H. SCHODDE, PH.D.



FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY

NEW YORK AND LONDON

1905

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PREFACE

FIFTY years ago I began my academic career in Königsberg with a lecture on the relation of Exegesis to Biblical theology. The programme that I then developed in the comparatively new science of Biblical theology has been fully elaborated in my text book on that subject, of which the seventh edition has made its appearance. In the same address the fact was emphasized, that the purely historical account of the different types of doctrine furnished by a theology of the New Testament must be supplemented by a work giving the underlying unity of this diversity. This idea I had never lost sight of during my university work of half a century; and I do not wish to close my academic jubilee year without its consummation.

This is done in the present volume, which is intended not for the learned alone but for all thinking Christians. The problem as to what the religion of the New Testament really is, has become a burning question of the day, and to this question the present volume is to give a brief but clear answer. The purpose is not to construe a theological system and then try to prove it from the Scriptures; but rather to permit the Scriptures to speak for themselves. Nor is it my endeavor to furnish an apology for what I regard as the religion of the New Testament. As I understand the Scriptures, they alone can furnish the evidences as to what they are and what they want, and they do this all the more when their contents are given in an objective and com-

plete manner. But I cannot suppress the hope that through the present volumes they will be shown as furnishing to many others what they have to me, their own proof, namely that they are the light and the strength of life.

B. WEISS.

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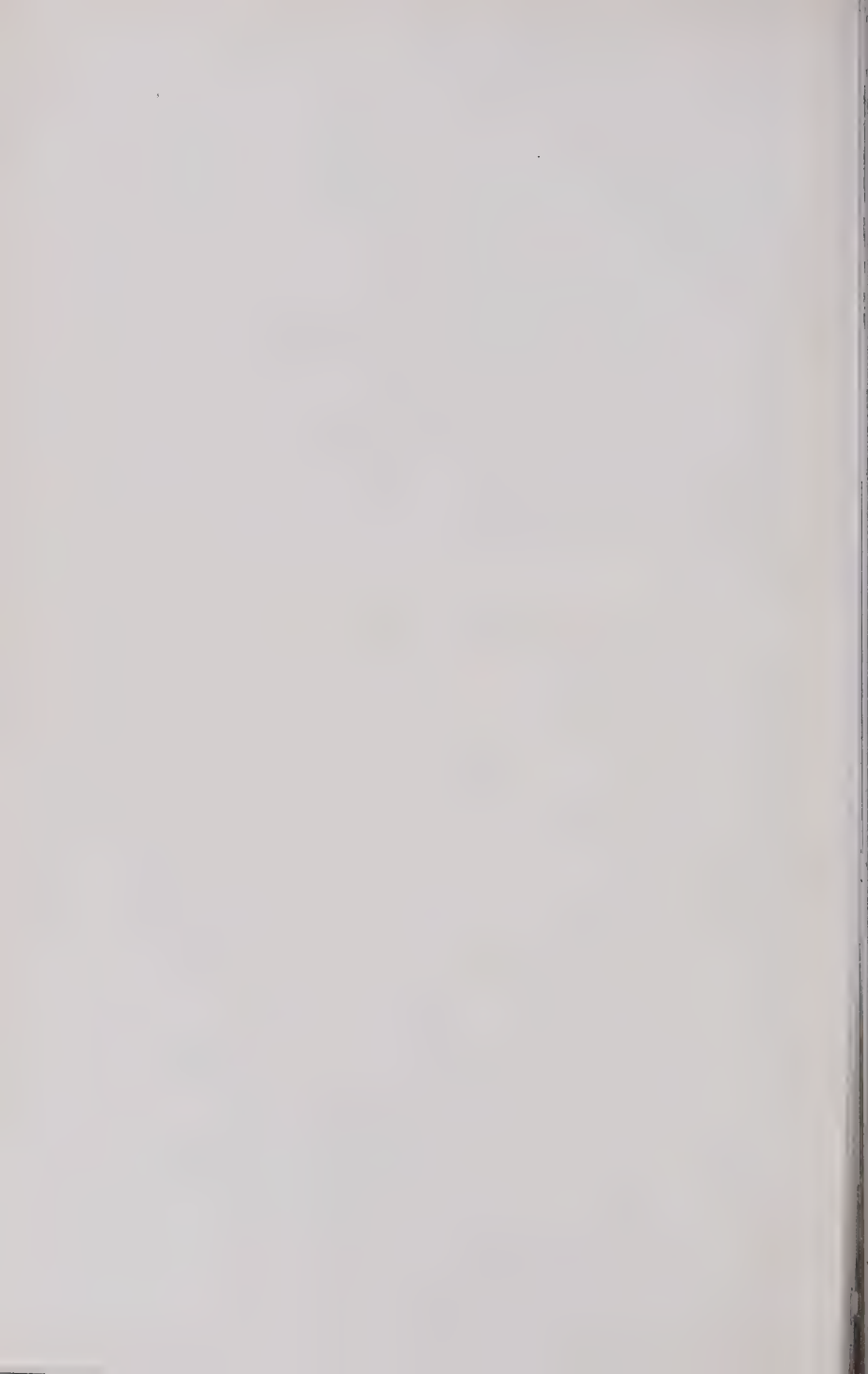
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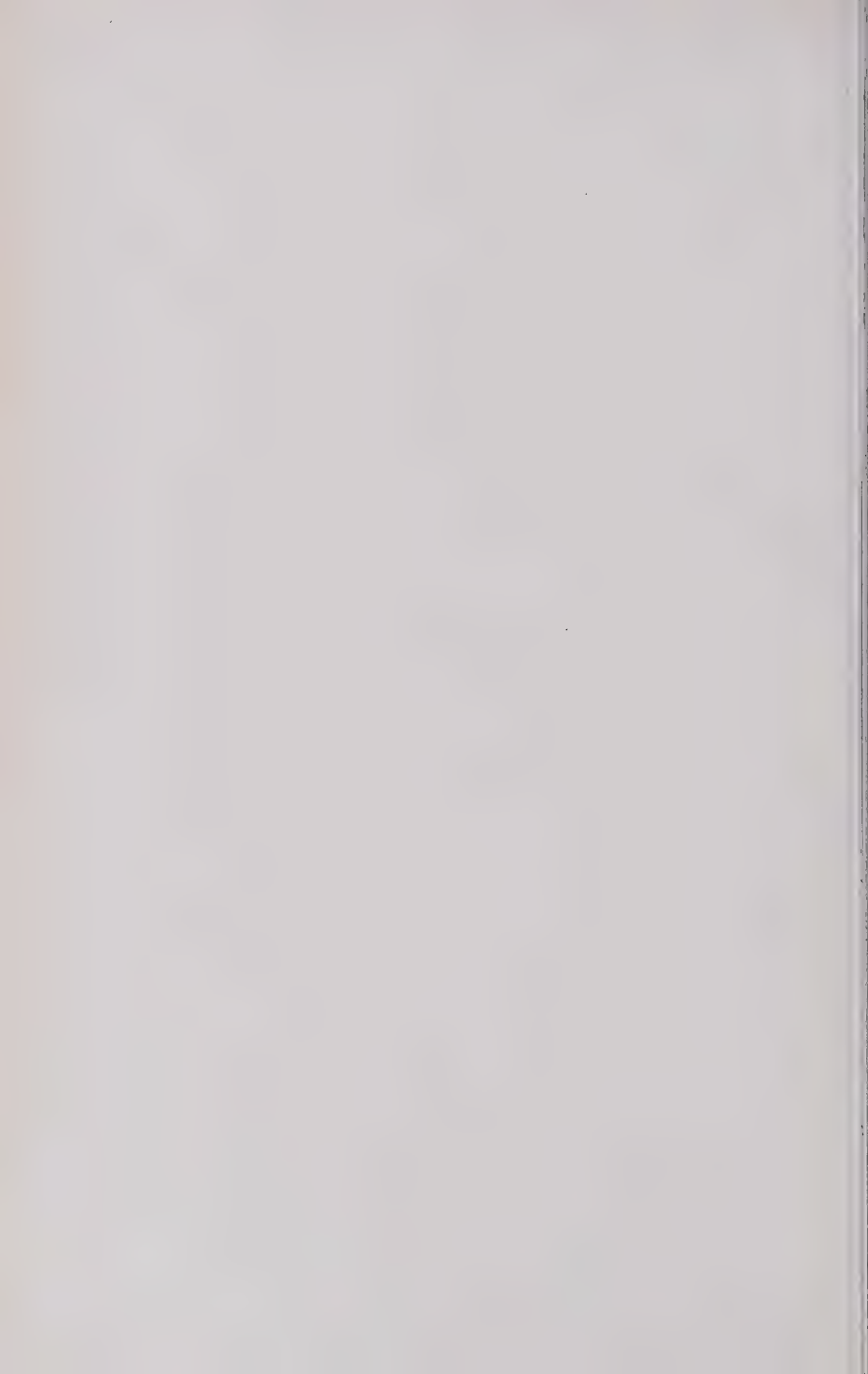
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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

1. **The Religion of the Old Testament.**—The New Testament has no term to express our conception of religion. This is not accidental, for the New Testament does not recognize a number of religions of which the one is only more perfect than the other, yet all of which have the same claim to be religion. The New Testament knows of only one religion, and that is the religion of Israel. Jesus, too, knew of none other. While yet a youth He went up to Jerusalem on the national festival of His people in order there to worship after the manner of the pious in Israel. When in the temple He feels that He is in his Father's house (Luke ii. 49). His first public appearance was on the occasion when He cleansed the temple of those who defiled it by buying and selling (John ii. 16). When the Samaritan woman, who believed that she had discovered in Him a prophet, asked if it really was necessary, as the Jews claimed, to worship God in Jerusalem (John iv. 19-20), He bases his decision on the consciousness of the Israelites, saying: Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship (John iv. 22). Indeed, without a knowledge of God there could be no worship of God, no religion, and Israel alone knows the true God. This statement on the part of Christ may seem surprising, for the

Samaritans certainly were monotheists as well as the Jews; indeed, their conception of God is generally regarded as being more spiritual than that of the Jews in Christ's time. But from this the conclusion must be drawn that Jesus, and in agreement with him the entire New Testament, did not find the essence of the knowledge of God in the conceptions that are entertained concerning the essence of God, but in the recognition of God in His revelations. To Israel He has revealed himself in the Law and in the Prophets; and, because the Samaritans rejected the entire revelation through the Prophets and recognized only the Pentateuch, Christ judges that their knowledge of God is insufficient.

The question here is not what perchance wise and pious men like Moses and the Prophets had taught, but rather what God had through them revealed concerning Himself. It is further clear from the reason which Jesus assigns for His position, that what the Samaritans lack is a knowledge of that salvation which God had promised His people through the Prophets, and which is to come from the Jews (John iv. 22). Their knowledge of God is a false knowledge, for in the Law, too, God has revealed Himself, only not yet as the one who is preparing salvation for His people. Jesus thereby teaches, that revelation is progressive, and that he who does not recognize God as He can and wants to be recognized in the progress of His revelations, does not in reality know Him at all.

But the religion of Israel is older than Moses and the Prophets, and reaches back to the Patriarchs. In the discussion of the resurrection question, Jesus appeals to the fact, that God has called Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Mark xii. 26, referring to Ex. iii. 6). This does not mean, that He is the God whom the Patriarch worshiped, but rather the God who through his revelations had entered

into a personal relationship with them; for Christ draws the conclusion that this relationship, in accordance with the essence of God, must necessarily be unchangeable. But with the consciousness of this personal relationship with God true religion as such can only begin. But God stands in exactly the same relationship to the descendants of the fathers, who can boast of God as their God (Rom. ii. 17). Paul finds in the promise that God would be Israel's God and that they shall be His people (Lev. xxvi. 12), the evidences of a relationship between God and them, which promises salvation and blessing to Israel. For he takes the position that this relationship has been fully realized only in Christianity (2 Cor. vi. 16), and delights to call God his God in the same sense (Rom. i. 8). From this it is evident that the knowledge of God which lies at the foundation of Israel's religion does not consist in the knowledge of certain abstract truths concerning His essence, and that the revelation concerning Him does not consist in information about these truths, but rather is based on an historical manifestation of the purposes concerning salvation, which God has in mind to realize in His people. As surely as their manifestation was progressive in character, so surely, too, must Israel's religion be a progressive development. But it is the same God of the fathers who is recognized and worshiped in it, and who is proclaimed by Jesus in His discussion with the Samaritan woman.

Paul, too, knew of no other God than the one who had already been revealed in the Old Testament, as can be seen from this, that, whenever he has anything to say concerning the nature of God, he nearly always expressly appeals to the Old Testament. It is for this reason, that, in the address delivered on Mars' Hill in the city of Athens, on which occasion he evinced most clearly his purpose to find a connecting link for his sermon in the heathen religious consciousness, he declares that he is proclaiming to them the God whose real character they do not know, as they

themselves acknowledge by the erection of altars to "The Unknown God." He admits, that the multitude of their altars and sanctuaries indeed shows that they are more Godfearing than other people; but the very expression that he chooses indicates that he does not pass a judgment on the object and the character of their divine worship (Acts xvii. 22-23). This is not the place to show how the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who has penetrated into the essence and origin of Gentile thought more deeply than anybody else, viewed this matter from his religious viewpoint. But because the heathen nations do not know the God of Israel and do not worship Him as their God in the Old Testament sense, they really do not know God at all, but live without God in the world (Gal. iv. 8; Eph. ii. 12). What we call the religion of the Gentiles he does not consider any religion at all, because for him there is but *one* religion, and that is the religion of Israel. This is the absolutely true religion, because it is based on the self revelation of God, of which the Old Testament bears testimony. There are no improvements to be made in this religion; there is nothing false in it that needs to be removed.

But for the reason that the revelation in the Old Testament appears in an historical and progressive character, the religion of Israel is not the perfection of religion. For the Old Testament everywhere points to something beyond itself, to a final and highest revelation of God. Since this has appeared in Christ there is not true knowledge of God except the knowledge through Him. The unbelieving Jews with whom Jesus deals do not know God, because they do not recognize Christ as the one sent by God as His final revelation (John vii. 28; viii. 19). They call God their God, but they do not know and do not want to know Him as Jesus knows Him, and as God has revealed Himself in Jesus: as the God who is effecting the consummation of salvation (John viii. 54-55). Here again it is seen that what Jesus calls knowledge

of God does not consist in the more or less adequate conception which a person entertains concerning God. Jesus frankly acknowledged the zeal with which the scribes of His day studied the Old Testament; He rebuked them, however, for being content with this and did not suffer themselves to be led to Him by the Scripture that certainly did testify of Him (John v. 39-40). The trouble was that they did not understand the Old Testament because they did not study it in the light of the fulfilment that had come with Him. The religion of Jesus is none other than the religion of the Old Testament; but because only in Him the perfect revelation of God had appeared, true religion also becomes perfectly realized only in Him. The Epistle to the Hebrews also emphasizes the prophecy, that in a new covenant God would be the God of Israel (Jer. xxxi. 33), in the sense that only this new covenant would bring with it the full blessings of religion. The author of this Epistle sees this prophecy fulfilled in the New Covenant, which Jesus established through his redemptive work (Heb. viii. 10), because through this covenant the promised blessings have for the first time all become our own. The Revelation of St. John even finds that primitive promise of Israel (Lev. xxvi. 12), for the fulfilment of which all the Prophets had hopefully looked, entirely fulfilled only in the final consummation which lies beyond all history, in which the final goal of all the divine plans of redemption is to be realized.

2. **The Theocracy of Israel.**—It is of fundamental significance for the knowledge of God in Israel that the essence of God as made known through revelation became the norm for all His worshipers. The whole Law is based on the principle: "Ye shall be holy: for I am holy" (Lev. xi. 44). The religion of Israel recognizes no difference between religion and morality. What the Scriptures call truth is both the known will of God as also the known essence of God. The truth is not only to be known (John viii. 32) but also

to be done (John iii. 21). A worship of God which does not at the same time bring with it the fulfilment of the will of God is in reality a dishonoring of God, because it would seem that God is not able to secure an obedience to His will on the part of His worshipers (Rom. ii. 23-24). The righteousness of man is that condition in which he conforms to the norm of the divine will (Deut. vi. 25). This will of God Israel finds in its Law. This Law not merely demands certain *cultus* forms, in which the correct worship of God finds its expression, but it contains also the regulations for all the affairs of the family, society, and the state. Israel was to be a Theocracy, i. e., a nation that recognized God as its Lord and His will as its only law. This Law by no means refers only to certain outward performances of a *cultus* or of an ethical kind. At the head of all the Commandments and Ordinances are found these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might" (Deut. vi. 5). It is clear that the further development at once shows that by these words are not meant indefinite religious feelings, which surely nobody can artificially awaken in himself, and which accordingly can guide nobody. The commandment rather demands that religious mind which, because it does not forget the mercies of God, wants to serve Him alone (Deut. vi. 12-13), and which accordingly can be instilled from early youth (Deut. vi. 7 sqq.). The Decalogue closes with the words: "Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor's" (Ex. xx. 17); and the Commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is the seal upon the words: "I am the Lord" (Lev. xix. 18), which show that this love also does not consist in feelings, but is to be exercised in accordance with the will of the Lord.

This revelation of the divine will Jesus also knew full well. He did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets (Matt. v. 17); He purposes only to fulfil them and to teach

how to fulfil them in accordance with the will of God that has been revealed to Him, but which will could not find ample and complete expression in the Law that had been given for the direction of the national life of Israel. Only these plants which his Heavenly Father has not planted he intends to root out (Matt. xv. 13). It was because of the holiness of the divine law that He antagonizes those human traditions which the theology of the day had heaped upon the Scriptures, thereby in many cases making the Word of none effect. In the words of an Old Testament prophet (Is. xxix. 13) He tells the religious leaders and guides of the people, that their service of God is of no avail because their doctrines are the ordinances of men (Mark vii. 6 sqq.). He finds nothing to add to the Old Testament Law and nothing to subtract from it as a human addition. In this law Israel had everything that it needed to realize in its Theocracy the true religion.

But Old Testament Judaism, too, was deeply saturated with this conviction that this ideal had not yet been realized in its national existence. All the Prophets upbraid the people and their leaders for their sins; all exhort them to fulfil the divine will. The seers of Israel never believe that this ideal has been perfectly attained, yet at the same time they never fail to be filled with the confident certainty, that a time would come when this ideal of the Theocracy would be realized in Israel's national existence. It is true that they never based this hope on a gradual development of the people, though to this they were ever confidently looking forward. It is only the last and final revelation of God, of which mention has been made above, to which the Old Testament points, when it expects a new act on the part of God in which the manifestations of His mercy toward His people are to be completed, when God will effect the perfect realization of the religion of Israel. This is the kernel of the Messianic hopes which in various shapes and forms are found in all of the

Prophets. It is not correct to say that the hopes for the realization of this ideal in Israel had been limited in a particularistic way. The Old Testament constantly points to this, that, when the Messianic era shall dawn, in which the religion of Israel shall have been realized in the life of the people, then the nations from far and near would join the Theocracy and worship the God of Israel. These are not dreams of political supremacy or world power, but only the natural and necessary expression of the conviction, that wherever the true religion develops its full blessings, there it possesses an irresistible power of attraction, through which it exercises a propaganda that embraces all mankind. It is true that the opinion is entertained that these blessings as expressed in the Messianic hopes of Israel were often conceived to be of a very external nature and to consist in a suitable reward of earthly goods. But the expectation that, together with the religious and moral perfection of Israel's national life, there was to be a time of the richest blessings for Israel, was no carnal dream, but was based on the fundamental conceptions of the true religion, according to which the religious and the secular life are not separate spheres, but mutually condition each other. If the fulfilment of the divine will is the perfect completion of religion, then, too, the highest salvation of man must include the earthly life also. For the will of God demands of man only that which aids his salvation, and this salvation must be realized in his outward as much as in his inner life.

3. **Jesus' Announcement of the Kingdom of God.**—Historically considered it cannot be questioned that Jesus based His proclamation on these Messianic hopes of His people. Accordingly, only on the ground of these presuppositions can the essence of Christianity be understood. It is impossible that Christianity should claim to be a new religion, for the one true religion has been given in the Old Testament and is accepted by Jesus as such. But this

religion has not yet been realized in Israel; the religion that is objectively contained in the Old Testament has not yet become a subjective religion, nor has it yet become a reality in the life of the nation. Israel has at all times been hoping for the time when this would be the case; and this hope is now being fulfilled. Jesus appears with the announcement, that the fulness of time has come, and that the kingdom of God is at hand (Mark i. 15). The time of preparation, which was destined to continue until the completion of the Theocracy, as this was promised and expected, has passed by; the fulfilment of all that Israel had ever hoped for, is at hand. Jesus brings these conceptions together in the idea of the Kingdom of God. But it is perfectly useless to construct out of his addresses an exact conception of what he meant by this thought. Jesus never explains this idea; he everywhere presupposes that it is known. What he means by it is nothing else than the completion of the Theocracy as expected in Israel, and thereby also the realization of the religious ideal as given in the Old Testament. It is one of the most manifest providential dispensations that this conception of Jesus, which He brings in close touch and contact with the historical situation, contains also a significance of a general historico-religious nature. Not a new religion did Jesus purpose to bring, but the realization of the one true religion in the Kingdom of God.

It is true that in the beginning of His ministry He merely states that the Kingdom of God is at hand. But it is useless to claim, that by this He only points to a goal in the distant future, which, however near or distant it may be thought, would not put in its appearance before the end of days in the new world, and that the idea of the Kingdom of God is to be understood in a purely eschatological sense. From the very beginning Jesus declared that in Him and in His appearance the predictions of the Old Testament were being fulfilled (Luke iv. 17-21); that His disciples had found in

him what the Prophets and the pious men of the Old Testament had longed to see (Matt. xiii. 17). But the Old Testament knows of only one consummation, which is to be established by the Messiah in and with His appearance among the people as He finds these. John the Baptist, who was beginning to doubt Jesus, because nothing was yet seen of the form in which he himself expected to see this realization, is directed by Jesus to the fact that the promised signs were already being fulfilled (Matt. xi. 3-6). He proves to the Pharisees that in His victory over the satanic powers on earth the Kingdom of God had come (Matt. xii. 28).

It was conditioned by the historical circumstances amid which Jesus began his work, that He for a long time carefully refrained from making the direct claims of his Messiahship. When He entered Jerusalem for the last time He accepted for Himself the honors of the Messianic king (Mark xi. 8-10). He claimed to be the Messiah who had been predicted in the Old Testament and whom the people were expecting; and before the Sanhedrin He solemnly laid claim to the Messianic dignity (Mark xiv. 62). But a Messiah who does not bring the Kingdom of God, but only, after the manner of the Prophets, predicts anew its advent is, in the religion of the Old Testament, a self-contradiction. In His person the realization of the true religion was given and through His activity this should also be effected in the people. If the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than the greatest born of woman (Matt. xi. 11), then there must already be some who are in this kingdom and have entered into it (Matt. xxi. 31). To those who ask concerning the coming of the Kingdom of God Jesus answers, that the kingdom is already within them (Luke xvii. 21). The Kingdom of God is compared with the field, in which a treasure is hid, or with the goodly pearl, which a man buys (Matt. xiii. 44-46). It is accordingly a present good, that

can be received, if like a child in the consciousness of need one longs for it (Mark x, 15).

This is indeed the secret of the Kingdom of God which Jesus announces in His Parables (Mark iv. 11), that this good is not bestowed upon the nation without his co-operation; that it will not, as the people expected, be realized by an act of power on the part of God in the forms of the national Theocracy. Jesus realized it through a spiritual activity, the success of which depends upon the condition of the heart, just as the success of the sower depends upon the nature of the field upon which his seed falls (Luke viii. 5-8). But the essence of this kingdom at all times consists in the promised realization of the Old Testament Theocracy. Jesus did not disclose this to His disciples in the form of theoretical discussion; but in the prayer which He taught them to use He put it upon their own lips. When each single individual calls upon God as his Father, then the religious ideal of Israel has been realized, as they found it in this, that they knew that as a nation they were chosen to be the child of God. When the will of God is done on earth as it is done in heaven (Matt. vi. 10), then the Kingdom of God has come and the ideal of the true religion has been realized in the national life of the people. For the will of God signifies the establishment of righteousness upon earth; and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are to be filled, because the Kingdom of God is theirs (Matt. v. 3, 6). But this does not exclude, that all the blessings of earthly life, which the Prophets had promised, are to come with the Kingdom of God. Jesus has not deprived His people of these promises; for those who seek first the Kingdom of God, to them these things shall be added (Luke xii. 31). But these are things that are added; the main thing still is the realization of righteousness, as the first evangelist explains, in full accord with the meaning of Jesus (Matt. vi. 33).

It has been said that if Jesus had regarded the Kingdom

of God as already present he would somewhere in a direct way have designated the circle of His disciples as this kingdom. But this He could not do. For even if the Kingdom of God had entered upon its realization in His disciples, this realization would still in the nature of the case be a progressive development. They still were called upon to seek the Kingdom of God and to pray for its advent. The ideal of religion in each case is realized only to that degree in which the distance from the ideal is felt, and in which one seeks it with work and with prayer. The idea that the Kingdom of God was present in the disciples, and that the ideal had been realized, would have destroyed this feeling and would have weakened their efforts. In the man in this world, where each hour brings new duties, this realization is and ever will be in the state of development. None is good, but one, and that is God (Mark x. 18); but man can never get beyond the stage of *becoming* good. To this another thing must be added. The Kingdom of God, according to prediction, is to be realized in the national life of Israel, and is to be the completion of the national Theocracy. Every direct designation of the circle of the disciples as the Kingdom of God would have appeared as a departure from the realization on the part of the nation as a whole. In how far such a departure would eventually take place did not depend upon Jesus alone; only the future would show this. At any rate He labored to the end for this; and He never separates His disciple-congregation from the great national congregation, nor does He devote himself exclusively to the former. Also after His death and when at His command Peter organized the first Messiah-congregation, the directions were given that it should continue His work among the people, until these as a nation had been won for the faith in the crucified and risen Lord. Only then could be effected in all Israel the realization of the Kingdom of God, for which the Prophets

had hoped; but the consummation of this project depended upon the further attitude of the people.

4. **The Kingdom of Heaven.**—But if the Kingdom of God should become a reality in Israel or in the surrounding nations, which Jesus had already appointed as the heirs of Israel in case that His people failed to fulfil their mission, even this could not constitute the final consummation of the Kingdom of God. The same principle that applies to the individual is applicable to the nations also, namely, that here upon earth the realization of the ideal can never pass beyond the stage of a development. This indeed appears to obliterate the specific difference between the Messianic time that was inaugurated with the advent of Jesus, and the preparatory stage marked by the Old Testament. The ideal of the Kingdom of God, in which the true religion is realized, was found also in the Old Testament. A certain kind of a beginning in its realization was already found in the Theocracy of Israel, however imperfect this may have been. If Jesus could do no more than bring about a beginning of its realization in the individuals and in the nation, wherein then did the new element consist, by which the Messiah of Israel differed from the Prophets, who also had hoped and labored for this realization? It is found in this, that with His advent that act of God had taken place, for which the Prophets had been looking in hope. He was the highest and the last divine revelation, which gave the guaranty for the realization of the longed-for goal; in His appearance the means had been given through which this goal could be attained. In the Old Testament times the religious ideal of Israel could not yet be realized, because the prerequisites for this were yet wanting, because there were as yet no means for a full deliverance from the guilt of sin and no real impulse and power to do the will of the Lord. In the person and the work of Christ all of these conditions were fulfilled for this, and that, too, in a most effective manner, which made its success abso-

lutely certain. The beginning of the Kingdom of God which He inaugurated was not of a kind that it could have failed of a completion, on the ground that the means for the attainment of this object could have been wanting. This beginning furnished the certainty that the goal would be attained. Christianity alone knows of a religious life, in which, if it is once really begun, there is found the full consummation, in which and with which in close union with the presence of redemption the whole future of redemption is certainly also ideally given.

This future completion of the Kingdom of God does as a matter of fact point to a time beyond this world of limitations and imperfections, in which an absolute realization of the ideal is not yet attainable. Without a doubt Jesus spoke also of this final completion of this kingdom, which is to be expected only in the world beyond, in a way not yet contemplated by the Old Testament. Entrance into this kingdom is the highest promise Jesus makes (Mark x. 23 sqq.); this is identical with entrance into eternal life (Matt. xviii. 8-9). The determination of those who are to participate in this kingdom is reserved for the final judgment (Matt. xxiv. 34), and this decision is made dependent upon their relation to the Kingdom of God now at hand. He who does not receive the latter with the simplicity of a child, cannot possibly enter the former (Mark xi. 15). Only for that person who is already in possession of the redemption now at hand does the promised completion of the same possess a real worth and a tangible reality. On the other hand, the certainty of that future redemption, as promised and guaranteed by Jesus, is only the last of the means by which He secures the realization for the kingdom He has founded. For the ideal as such has no impelling power; only the certainty that it can be and will be realized gives to the efforts to attain it the strength that never grows weary.

How firmly this certainty has impressed itself on the

Christian consciousness is seen from a peculiar expression used by the first gospel. At the same time when the destruction of the national state of Israel made it for all times impossible that this ideal should be realized in the historic Theocracy, this evangelist begins to apply to this completion of the Kingdom of God the term "Kingdom of Heaven," i. e., the kingdom that is realized in heaven. He and he alone it is who puts into the discourses of Jesus the expression "Kingdom of Heaven," and that too not only in those that speak of the completion of the kingdom of God, but also in those that speak of this kingdom as already present (Matt. v. 19; xiii. 52; xviii. 4). In his eyes the Kingdom of God as established by Jesus upon earth was in all cases already the beginning and the pledge of its heavenly consummation. Thereby the idea has been definitely excluded that Jesus had intended to make preparations only for a future Kingdom of God, and that the kingdom was to be found only in the world to come. Here the modern reconstruction of the proclamation of Jesus, which claims that this was formed on the basis of contemporaneous history, comes into close and most dangerous proximity to the perfectly unhistorical conception which declares that the essence of Christianity, in which religion attains its perfection, consists in this, that it merely prepares man for heaven. But it was Jesus' purpose to bring about the realization of the Kingdom of God *in His people* and thereby He has implanted into Christianity the impetus to realize the religious ideal already here upon earth, in so far as this can be done consistently with the limitations and imperfection of all that is of the earth.

In the beginning of this realization in a manner that brings with it the certainty of its completion, is to be found also the guaranty that Christianity is the absolute religion. If there were such a thing as a gradation of religions, of which the one is more perfect than the other, then none could ever claim that it is the absolutely perfect creed. For under

the conditions of time, which are subject to the law of growth, the proof can never be brought, that any particular religion which we would to-day consider as the most perfect would not be crowded into the background to-morrow by one that is still more perfect. But if there is but *one* true religion, the realization of which according to the law of human development can only be of a progressive character, then the acme of the history of religion has been actually attained, and its realization assured, when it needs no other means for its realization than those found in Christianity.

5. The Announcement of the Kingdom of God by the Apostles.—Surprise has often been expressed that the idea of the Kingdom of God, which constitutes the centre of Jesus' discourses, is virtually ignored in such a noteworthy manner in the preaching of the Apostles. Of course we are compelled on this subject to distinguish between different groups in the remnants of the Apostolic preaching that have been handed down to us. In the preaching of the earliest Apostolic times the feeling is emphasized that the Kingdom of God as Jesus has founded it in Israel, and as Peter still seeks to bring it about by his sermon of repentance (Acts iii. 20-21), was not realized on account of the conduct of the people. Accordingly there remains only the hope of the completion in the world beyond; and this is the real heart and soul of all the earliest preaching of the Apostles. The faithful feel that they are already in possession of redemption (James ii. 5). That this term "Kingdom of God," occurs so rarely in the Apostles is to be explained on the ground, that the return of Jesus, which marks that consummation, is everywhere found in the foreground of apostolic thought and as its clearest and most tangible object. On this idea is based the whole exhortation of the Epistle of James; indeed, it can be said that this is the sole specifically Christian element in this letter. Throughout in the manner of Old Testament faith, the readers are admonished to fulfil the Law, which,

however, is very evidently already understood in the manner of Jesus, and to be patient in suffering. For both, the speedy return of the Judge is the leading motive. The First Epistle of Peter starts out from the regeneration to a lively hope; the theme of the letter is the heavenly inheritance, as the Kingdom of God in its complete realization is termed (cf. Heb. ix. 15), because we can now already be sure of participating in it (1 Pet. i. 3-4). But here already we find as a ground for this the fact that in the congregation of believers out of Israel the religious ideal of the Old Testament has been realized (1 Pet. ii. 9-10), in that sense in which Jesus purposed to realize it in the present Kingdom of God. For this reason the exhortation of this epistle is directed constantly and steadily to a more complete realization of this ideal (1 Pet. i. 15). In a very marked way the significance of the death of Christ for salvation is made prominent (1 Pet. i. 18, 19; ii. 24; iii. 18); but the deepest motive for this exhortation is nevertheless always to be found in the hopes of the Christians. Not without good reasons has Peter been called the Apostle of Hope. The second epistle that bears his name everywhere purposes to fight against the danger that threatens the development of a Christian life by holding up the hope of the return of Christ over against the doubt that had been awakened by the delay in his reappearance. The Gentile Christians, indeed, to whom the letter is written, who know nothing of the hopes of Israel, are reminded only of the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Christ (2 Pet. i. 11), as it shall be realized after the destruction of the present world in a new heaven and a new earth (2 Pet. iii. 13). All the more the promise of Israel constitutes the central thought of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The purpose of the entire exhortation of this writing is to make the reader cling to this hope at a time when the failure of the return of the Messiah had begun to shake this faith. A foundation is built for this hope by the demon-

stration on a grand scale, that in Christ, or rather in his high priestly atoning sacrifice, with which the Messianic era of salvation has been inaugurated, the conditions are for the first time fulfilled for the realization of the kingdom which cannot be moved (Heb. xii. 28), and which the old covenant with its means could not achieve. Entirely in agreement with the proclamation of Jesus concerning the kingdom the believers from all the nations constitute a kingdom in the Apocalypse of St. John, which Christ has prepared for God (Rev. i. 6, 9; v. 10). In the visions of this book the point at issue is always to show, that as a result of the final contests the kingdom of the world becomes that of God and His Christ (Rev. xi. 15). It can be claimed that the entire preaching of the primitive Apostolic times has an eschatological coloring.

In this regard a change is observable when we come to the Apostle Paul. Naturally for him also, from the very outset the consummation of the Kingdom of God in the world beyond constitutes the final goal of the Christian hope (1 Thess. ii. 11; 2 Thess. i. 5); but for him the Kingdom of God, entirely in accordance with the teachings of Jesus, has become an ideal which is realized already in this world in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. xiv. 17). In the justification through grace achieved through the redemptive death of Christ, and in the adoption into sonship by God, the religious ideal is already realized in the present world. Through the agency of the Holy Ghost, who becomes the source of the new life in the believers, the ethical idea is progressively realized. Now already they are changed into the image of the glory of the Lord, which they are at the same time also to possess bodily (2 Cor. iii. 18). Now already we are saved for the future goal of our hope (Rom. viii. 24; cf. Eph. ii. 5), although the finished redemption can be attained only when we are transformed into the life of the exalted Son of God (Rom. v. 10). The center of the

whole Pauline proclamation of redemption is found in the salvation which Christ has achieved for the present time, in which the future consummation is already guaranteed.

But it was reserved for that apostle through whom the religion of the New Testament attained its most exalted expression, fully to develop this viewpoint. Only a single time is there heard in the discourses of Christ as transmitted by John the echo of the idea of the Kingdom of God (John iii. 3, 5). But exactly as Jesus purposed to realize the Kingdom of God already in this world, so that it might come in the future world, the writer of the fourth gospel starts out from that which in the world beyond is to constitute the actual contents of our blessedness, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God" (Matt. v. 8). In this seeing of God consists the blessedness of the eternal life in the world beyond. But this seeing God begins already in this world, when we through faith see God in Christ. He that believes has eternal life; he has passed through death into life (John v. 24). And he only who has life in this world will Jesus also awaken unto the life beyond the grave on the last day (John vi. 20). He who has not seized upon the highest good in this world cannot attain it in the next. The Apostles were not sent out to repeat the words of Jesus but to interpret them to meet the needs of their own times. It is possible to count how rarely they have made use of his expression "Kingdom of God." But however different their individualities were, as also how different their methods of preaching in accordance with the circumstances and times, their Christianity was none other than the Christianity of Christ.

CHAPTER II

THE ESSENCE OF REVELATION

1. **The Primitive Revelation.**—What the New Testament calls Revelation is not the supernatural communication of facts about God and divine things, but an actual making known the transcendental in the world of sense, because all the knowledge of man comes from experience, and that from without. The fact that something concerning the nature of God can at all become known, is attributed by the Apostle Paul (Rom. i. 9) to this, that He has made himself known, in so far as His invisible being and His eternal power and godhead are seen from the creation of the world, in everything that He has produced (Rom. i. 20). "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork," is already affirmed by the Old Testament (Ps. xix. 1). But this revelation is ever of a progressive kind. God has not left Himself without witness among men, in that He did good, and gave rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling the hearts with food and gladness (Acts xiv. 17). Jesus makes use of these revelations of God in nature, when He proves the all comprehensive goodness of God by declaring, that He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Matt. v. 45); and when in speaking of the providence of God for His creatures He points to the birds of the air, which He feeds, and the flowers of the field that He clothes (Matt. vi. 26, 28-30). But in the historical development of the heathen world also, which step by step gradually sank into the depths of religious and moral corruption, Paul sees a revelation of the wrath of God from

heaven (Rom. i. 18). All history, i. e., the vicissitudes in the life of the nations, is for him a progressive revelation of God. In the way in which the nations are scattered over the earth by God and in the boundaries and times that He has determined for them, the Apostles sees the manifest purposes of God (Acts xvii. 26-27).

But to understand these manifestations of God there is need of a special organ. Since man is made out of the dust of the earth (1 Cor. xvii. 47), he did not in his material nature possess this organ. But when Paul declares, that the first man became a living soul, he thereby refers back to Genesis ii. 7, according to which this took place by God's breathing into man's nostrils the breath of life. There is accordingly, because of this original inspiration, an element in man related to the divine, which as such enables him to understand these divine manifestations as they are. The invisible nature of God becomes visible through the works of creation, when they are understood by the power of intelligence (Rom. i. 20). This is the spiritual eye, from the condition of which, according to the words of Jesus, is made dependent the capability of man to receive within himself the light of the divine revelation, which in itself shines with sufficient brightness (Luke xi. 33-34). This element in man, that is related to the divinity, also makes it possible, that the will of God can be revealed to him as also the essence of God. By the side of all the impulses that originate in his material nature, the higher impulse also makes itself felt, which thwarts and regulates the former. In this inner experience also an original revelation of God appears. Paul says of the heathen people, that the works demanded by the Law are written in their hearts (Rom. ii. 15). But this natural consciousness of moral duties must also be recognized by reason as the will of God that has been revealed to us (Rom. xii. 2). If this is done, then all the conditions are present in primitive revelation for the realization of

religion. But that, too, would not be a "natural religion"; it too would be dependent on divine revelation.

Even if in certain particulars the beginnings of this religion are in a degree realized, and even if the Epistle to the Hebrews counts among the men of the olden times, of whom the Old Testament speaks, Abel, Enoch, Noah, as those, who on account of their faith were pleasing to God (Heb. xi. 4-7), and if Paul does speak of those who by nature do the will of God (Rom. ii. 14-26-27); and if according to St. John scattered children of God are to be found also among the heathens (John xi. 52), notwithstanding all this, a realization of this religion among mankind at large has not been achieved. The impressions made upon the natural powers of man by manifestations of God in the world within and around him could lead to a real knowledge and worship of God only if man would subject himself to Him and suffer Him to determine his thought at will. But this did not take place. Men did not recognize the God who manifested Himself in His revelation as He is, nor did they glorify Him for his goodness (Rom. i. 21). It was human pride that refused to acknowledge a being above man; and the selfishness that receives the gift but forgets the giver, Paul calls the unrighteousness of man by which he hinders the development of truth in their consciousness (Rom. i. 18). Instead of filling their minds with this highest object of all thought, they have directed them to that which is vain and useless by nature (Rom. i. 21); they did not consider it worth while to attain to a true knowledge of God (Rom. i. 28). In this way the ability that had originally been bestowed upon them was lost, since all power grows only by exercise, but is lost through neglect, their hearts having become incapable of appreciating the divine have become dark (Rom. i. 21); or, as we are told in Eph. iv. 17-18, because their minds were emptied of their highest contents men have become darkened in their whole sense and thought. Jesus had already

declared, that if the spiritual eye is evil then all is darkness (Luke xi. 34-35).

The same is true of the revelation of God in the moral consciousness originally implanted into man. If man is not willing to recognize the will of God that has in this way been implanted into him, then he gives himself up to the lusts of his own heart (Rom. i. 24) until his mind is gradually incapacitated from knowing the will of God (Rom. i. 28). The heart becomes more and more hardened, so that it no longer recognizes the divine impulse that has been implanted into him as that what it is; and having been incapacitated to receive its influence, it gives itself up to the gratification of the lowest desires (Eph. iv. 18-19). It is this unbridled supremacy of the senses that prevents man from doing the will of God, just as his selfish pride restrains him from doing honor to God. It is natural that the needs that had been awakened by the ability of man to receive religious impulses could not be entirely crushed. Hence came those impotent efforts of the gentile peoples by their own reason and power to make religions for themselves, which the New Testament pronounces mere caricatures of true religion. As a matter of fact, the original revelation of God has not resulted in the realization of religion in mankind. This was not the case because this revelation did not in itself possess the power to establish religion in the hearts of men, but because the greater power of sin in man made this revelation ineffective.

If notwithstanding this, religion should yet become a reality, a new revelation of God was a necessity, which with new means would be able to overcome that obstacle which had made it impossible for the original revelation to attain its purposes. If it was sin that brought men into that non-religious state that leads to destruction, then it was necessary to inaugurate a new plan of redemption, by which sin could be overcome and the realization of religion be made possible.

As little as mankind, enslaved by the power of sin was by its own power able to deliver itself from its oppressor, so little could natural reason come to a knowledge of the means which God applied in order to effect the conquest of sin. But in this instance too the new revelation could not consist in the communication of new knowledge, which man, made incapable through sin to receive that which is divine, would not have been able even to appropriate and would not have been able to impel man on to the consummation of true religion, since his will was enslaved by sin. This revelation could consist only in new historical manifestations of God, which made it possible for men in an effective way to see and praise God; it could consist only in a new revelation of redemption.

2. **The Revelation of Redemption in Israel.**—The New Testament everywhere points to the Israelites as recipients of the divine revelation through which the true religion is to be established. Thus distinction is made between the original revelation and that of redemption. The former was the same for all men. It made known the same things and by the same means to primitive man and to all others. If mankind as such had been incapacitated, through the original revelation that constituted their common possession to realize this religion, then it became necessary for the revelation of redemption to address itself to the individuals, in order first of all in these and through these and among those under their influence to attain these ends. This is the sense in which the New Testament declares that Abraham and the Patriarchs were chosen by God (Acts xiii. 17). In the fact that God appeared to Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia and directed him to leave his native land and his family, Stephen, in Acts vii. 2, 3, sees the fulfillment of this selection. The Old Testament history tells us also of other and similar visions to him and the Patriarchs. Of what nature these were we are not informed. No certain

historical knowledge reaches up to these primitive times; and religious experiences like those lauded in Heb. xi. 8-22, as a typical faith of the Patriarchs in the midst of Gentile surroundings, by the very nature of the case, are not subject to exact historical tradition. Certain is only this, that these were individual experiences, in which God made Himself known immediately, and that the consciousness of God, which in them also had been weakened or entirely extinguished, was awakened unto new life, in a manner not possible for the original revelation through the creation of God. But as all the knowledge of man originates in external experience, it is probable that this revelation too was in some way transmitted in a manner understood by the senses.

The family of the Patriarch grows into the nation of Israel, which is conscious of the fact that it has received its religion from the Father (2 Tim. i. 3). But the traditional religion can become a living power in the nation only then, if through constant and new actual manifestations, God reveals Himself to the people. At the very beginning of its national existence, when the people for the first time step out of the old family relations, are found the great miracles and signs at the Red Sea, where God with a mighty hand delivers Israel from the servitude of Egypt, and in the desert, where He sustains them miraculously for forty years (Acts vii. 36, 13, 17). Israel at all times saw in these events the fundamental revelations of their God. Paul yet recognizes in the passage of the Red Sea, in the giving of Manna, in the water from the rock the highest manifestations of the grace of God to His people (1 Cor. x. 1, 3). As original revelation could enable God to be seen only through the order of nature, in the revelation of redemption God made Himself known through extraordinary events, that appeared to be contrary to the laws of nature. It is a matter of perfect indifference if these were miracles in the

dogmatical sense of the word or merely natural phenomena, the appearance of which at the decisive moment brought help and deliverance when this seemed no more possible. For the very reason that Israel saw in these phenomena the unmistakable indication of the hand of God, they were for them miracles and signs, in which they recognized God as their God and were themselves impelled to worship him. It has already been seen that Paul saw in the history of the nations in general this original revelation through which the providence of God was to be made manifest. But more clearly and in a more direct way this became manifest, when the history of Israel was taken into consideration, in which the purpose of God for their redemption were made manifest in a most unmistakable manner. As Stephen does in his address in Acts vii., Paul, in his address at Antioch, Acts xiii., reminds the Jews of this providence of God in the history of His people. In this the revelation of redemption itself becomes history. This lies in the nature of the case. As sin, which made the realization of the original revelation an impossibility had become such in an historical manner and had grown gradually into a power that enslaved mankind, thus too sin could be overpowered only in an historical manner. While the original revelation necessarily at all times was and remained the same, the revelation of redemption, in accordance with the law of historical development, must unfold itself with increasing clearness and new power. In order to do this, it must seek among mankind a community, which, united inwardly and outwardly, would be able to become the body in which the divine educational process could become a reality in the progressive unfolding of its redemptive institution. This is the sense in which the New Testament designates the people of Israel as the recipients of divine revelation. Their history becomes the history of redemption. The purpose is not that this people alone is to be the possessor of redemp-

tion, but that primarily redemption shall be realized in their midst, and that thus this nation shall become the mediator for a new revelation of redemption for all peoples, for all mankind.

To attain this end it is above all things necessary that the people of God in their national life recognize this mission. In order to understand the original divine revelation mankind had been endowed with the power of intelligence as the organ through which God could be known in His manifestations. But sin had weakened and dulled this organ, and the original and general inspiration no longer sufficed to understand this new revelation of redemption. A new inspiration was needed for this purpose, namely an immediate influence impressed by God upon the spiritual life of the recipients of this revelation, that would open their eyes to see the divine manifestations. In the earliest ages it was the patriarchs themselves to whom this understanding became clear through the visitations of God which they experienced, so that they could themselves establish the true religion in the circle of their families, for which reason they are also called "Prophets" (Gen. xx. 7; Ps. cv. 15). At the head of the national history of Israel stands the figure of Moses, with whom God spoke face to face, as one does with a friend (Ex. xxxiii. 11). He constitutes the connecting link between the times of the patriarchs, in which Abraham is called the Friend of God (James ii. 23) and of the Prophets, which belongs with Samuel (Acts iii. 24). To the latter David also belongs, through whose mouth the Holy Ghost spake, when he sang his Psalms (Acts i. 15), as also the long list of men, whom we call Prophets in the narrower sense of the term. These were chosen by God to be the interpreters of the new divine revelation for the people. Just because inspiration was not an act of magic, i. e., not an impress of God made upon the mental life of man immediately, it was necessary that God select men for

Himself, whose special religious receptivity would enable them to receive in a vivid manner these impulses from God, that opened their eye to see the manifestations of God in the history of the people. For in this case too it was not a supernatural imparting of certain new truths in themselves, which could in the nature of the case have been effected only in a manner contrary to the laws of our intellectual life. The Prophets were merely called to interpret to the people that which God intended in His guiding of the people. They appear at specially critical periods of its history; they teach the people to recognize in all of its vicissitudes the manifest will and purposes of God. The authors of those psalms too which are not ascribed to David are regarded as Prophets (Matt. iii. 35). Asaph, who is mentioned as the author of the xxviii. Psalm here quoted, is mentioned in 2 Chron. xxix. 30, as a Prophet. Their songs are the expression of the religious feeling that has been aroused in them through their understanding of the divine revelation, that the spirit enabled them to feel, and that these lyrics when read and sung by the people affect them the same way. The Jews also designate the authors of their historical books as Prophets; these latter interpret the history of the people past as the Prophets in no special sense of the term interpret the history of the present. The external affairs are not what they chiefly aim to narrate, but they purpose rather to expound the divine plan, which is being realized in this history. Prophecy, as it appears in Israel, is an entirely unique phenomenon. It is most intimately connected with the fact that Israel is the people of the revelation of redemption. Prophecy is the means through which this people is enabled to understand this divine revelation.

3. **The Law and the Prophets.**—Already in this revelation God's will is made known through the moral consciousness implanted in man. But Paul emphasizes in Rom.

ii. 27, that Israel had received a much more powerful impulse to do the will of God, because Israel had received the written law. It was possible for the original moral consciousness to be darkened, or entirely eradicated by sin Rom. i. 28-32, but the written law declared the will of God in unmistakable objectivity. To this, according to Rom. ii. 27, circumcision was yet added, which had dates back not to Moses but to the patriarchs (John vii. 22), and which expressly obligated the people to a fulfillment of the divine will. The effort is made to rob this act of its religious significance by drawing attention to the fact, that circumcision is found also among other people and was a medical measure. But this will make no difference. Israel had already learned through its prophetic interpretation of its history to regard this rite as one that had been enjoined upon the patriarchs as the sign of a covenant between them and Jehovah (Gen. xvii. 10-11), through which God had obligated Himself to bless the chosen people (Rom. iv. 11), as in turn the people had thereby obligated themselves to keep His law (Gal. v. 3), and this meant more than a mere external observance of the Law. The very prophetic interpretation of the law (Deut. xxx. 6, cf. Jer. ix. 25, Ez. xlv. 7) is understood by Paul as a type of the circumcision of the heart which constitutes the kernel of true Judaism, and as a removal of all impurities from the life of the inner man (Rom. ii. 28, 29). The Law was given by Moses (John i. 17). To this Old Testament tradition the entire New Testament adheres firmly. No matter what commandment of the Law is under consideration, the historical question which of these laws or ordinances came from Moses or the Mosaic period, is not taken into consideration. Moses merely heads the long series of divinely appointed men, whose mission it was to bring to the people the revelation of the will of God. In the very nature of the case it is a part of the calling of all the Prophets to interpret

and to supplement the laws that had been given through Moses according to the changed conditions of the times, and in each case to give the instructions required by the times for the religious relationship that existed between God and his people. Jesus, however, purposes to teach the fulfillment of the will of God as this has been revealed in the Law and in the Prophets (Matt. v. 17, cf. vii. 12; xxii. 40). In this case then Moses and the Prophets are not only the interpreters of the revelation of God in the history of Israel; they are independent bearers and transmitters of such revelation. Just here it is that we find in perfect clearness the unique character of this high inspiration that marks the revelation of redemption.

In that passage in which Jesus tells the spiritual leaders of His people, that they possessed the revelations of the past only in their sacred writings and that their conduct over against these made it impossible for them to understand the divine manifestations that had appeared in Him (John v. 38 sqq.) He characterizes the prophetic revelation. They live, if they disregard Him, in a time that lacks revelation; they have never yet heard the Voice of God nor have they seen His shape (John v. 37). With these words, He plainly refers to both kinds of prophetic revelations. Unless we boldly charge these godpleasing men of the Old Testament as liars or as visionary dreamers, then they were considered as worthy of receiving religious experiences, in which the will of God impressed itself upon them with such immediate certainty, that there could not for a moment be a doubt, that they were not declaring the results of their own thoughts when they proclaimed: "Thus saith the Lord!" On these experiences are based all the manifestations of the will of God in the Law and in the Prophets. Whether these be regarded immediately as a divine activity, so that God spoke through their mouths (Acts iv. 23), or as transmitted through the medium of the Spirit, is a matter of indiffer-

ence. Paul declares that the Law was imparted by the Spirit (Rom. vii. 14); and was accordingly written by inspiration; and Peter teaches that the Messianic predictions were the work of the Spirit (1 Pet. i. 11).

The other form of prophetic prophecy is the vision. We meet this form in the New Testament. Paul had visions which he ascribed to the influence of the exalted Christ and given to himself as a special revelation (2 Cor. xii. 1). On the basis of such visions, which enabled John to see God, rests the Apocalypse. In itself the vision is a psychological process, in which, although the natural eye be closed, the spiritual eye sees phenomena in which it recognizes a higher meaning. If these visions come from God or from Christ, then they become the mediums of divine revelations. In what John saw a word of the Lord and a testimony of Christ was transmitted to him of that which God had given him, to show his servants concerning his counsels about the future (Rev. i. 1 sqq.). For this reason his book is called a revelation coming from Christ. On such visions doubtlessly to a large extent were based also the divine appearances in the times of the patriarchs, in which the redemptive purposes of God for the future of their race were made known to them. The same is true of the prophetic discourses, in so far as these were of a predictive nature, the word of the Lord that came to Micah is especially designated as one that he had seen concerning Samaria and Jerusalem (Mich. i. 1).

Prediction is indeed by no means the principal or the exclusive mission of the Prophets, but it constitutes an essential part of prophecy. For everywhere in the New Testament reference is made not only to the Law but also to predictive prophecy as a special prerogative of Israel (Rom. ix. 4). Already in the Law itself there is found, connected with the demand for the fulfillment of the divine will, a promise of blessings which this fulfillment will bring

with it, the counter picture being found in the threats for the transgressor. But the real object of predictions and promises is at all times the divine determination in reference to the future of Israel, which the New Testament in its kernel finds already in this promise given to Abraham (Rom. iv. 13; Heb. vi. 13-14, 17-18; xi. 9-10). This is based on the character of the revelation of redemption as a progressive development. At each step of this development the truth that had so far been revealed would not have been recognized as correct, if the bearer of this revelation had not been conscious of the limitations of this trust. The entire revelation of redemption in Israel points to a higher goal beyond itself, in which the history of salvation shall find its consummation. It is the specific purpose of predictive prophecy to declare the divine counsel concerning this goal. This is necessary for the reason already, that at the advent of the perfect revelation the latter will be recognized as that for which in accordance with the purposes of God, preparation had been made in earlier revelations. This already shows that predictive prophecy is not the foretelling of individual data and facts but the declaration of the divine redemptive purposes for the future. It is of course not impossible that individual facts may also have been predicted according to God's purposes. But predictive prophecy as such has nothing to do with these. For the very reason that this is only the promise concerning the goal, to which the divine redemptive purpose guides the chosen people, it cannot claim to foretell the manner in which this purpose is to be fulfilled. Notwithstanding his absolute faith in the prophetic promises concerning Christ and the salvation wrought Him, Paul, in Eph. iii. 5, says that the secret of redemption had not been revealed in other generations to the children of men, but had now been made manifest through the holy Apostles and Prophets. The former could know only of the goal; but the ways which God would adopt

for the purpose of attaining His object, could in their realization be made known only to the latter.

4. **The Revelation in Christ.**—The New Testament proceeds from the premises that the entire Old Testament in its predictions points to Christ. In Him must be given that highest and final revelation of God promised to Israel by its Prophets. Thus in this final consummation the essence of revelation is made entirely clear. What had been promised Israel was not at all the communication of a certain number of new truths, the appropriation of which would in itself bring salvation; but it was the sending of the Messiah, who together with the complete realization of the true religion would bring to the people the entire promised salvation. Jesus Himself explains what He means when He speaks of the revelation which the Father had given to Him to carry out (Luke x. 21-22), by declaring that what all the Prophets and kings had desired to see and had not seen had appeared in Him (Luke x. 23-24). But the eye-witnesses of the life of Jesus saw this in the sending of the Son as the Saviour of the World (1 John iv. 14), especially in the submission of the Son to the atoning death, wherein the deepest love of God become manifest (John iii. 14 sqq.). Paul declares that the advent of Christ was the appearance of the life bringing grace of God, of the kindness and love of God (Tit. ii. 11; iii. 4). As God revealed himself in the works of creation, thus He makes known His innermost essence for the first time in this, that he fulfills his promises and sends to the people Him who can bring to them the most complete salvation.

As the revelation of redemption began with the appearances of God in the history of the patriarchs, it attains its final consummation in the theophany of Christ. When Philip, for the strengthening of the faith of the disciples, demands a theophany after the manner of the Old Testament, Jesus answers: "He that hath seen me hath seen the

Father" (John xiv. 9). He Himself declares that this statement is not a dogmatical proposition concerning the equality of Himself with the Father, but that the words which He speaks are not His own words, and the works He does are the works of God, who dwells in Him (John xiv. 10); so that God manifests Himself in all that Jesus says and does. For the spiritual nature of God there exists no more adequate and therefore no higher form of representation than the form of an earthly spiritual being, than man, who is created after His image. In Christ's daily labors for the salvation of His people, in His unselfish life of love that even caused Him to give up His life as a ransom, the innermost essence of God is made manifest. Nor do His words at all times purpose to convey certain new truths; they are at bottom only the interpretation of the revelation of God that has appeared in Him, as which the gospel of St. John has revealed them in their deepest significance. With this highest form of divine revelation it is most intimately connected, that no other special revelation of the divine will is needed. Christ has come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets in all His doings (Matt. v. 17). The will of God with its demands no longer stands before us as an unattainable ideal. Just as the divine redemptive plan for man was perfectly fulfilled in Him, thus he also shows that in his life have been fulfilled all those demands of God made in the Law and the Prophets of man. Just as His words in the gospel of St. John emphasize the manifestation of God's revelation in Him, thus His words in the earlier gospels point to the fulfillment of the revelation of God's will through Him. They teach how to fulfil the Old Testament revelation as this should be fulfilled in the advent of the era of grace, and point to new demands as these arise from the completed revelation of God in Jesus.

In the preparatory revelation of redemption the direct activity of God in the history of His people exhibited itself

in signs and wonder. The advent of Christ, in whom the revelation of redemption has reached perfection, is the absolute miracle. Here we find in the midst of the world of sin *that one* whom nobody could convince of sin (John viii. 46), the Holy and Sinless One, as which He was proclaimed by all of His apostles. Here in the midst of mankind, who are of the earth, is found a man whose origin goes back to an eternal divine existence and whose final goal shall be His exaltation to the divine glory. His nature cannot have been derived from mankind as this is; it is a gift of God to mankind, a new branch planted into mankind, that receives for the latter the attainment of its goal. The miracles of His activity correspond to the miracles of His person. The older gospels call them Miracles; the fourth gospel, Signs. But they are not merely signs of a certain power which is greater than that of man; for He went about doing good and healing those that were oppressed of the devil (Acts. x. 38). When the Baptist doubted if Christ was the Promised One, Jesus refers him to the miracles He did to the sick, as a proof that in Him had appeared the saving grace of God, which transformed also the external life (Matt. xi. 5). Because it was only through the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus drove out devils, only through Him too has the sovereignty of God been realized, which puts an end to the sovereignty of Satan upon earth (Matt. xii. 28). With this the history of redemption in Israel has reached the consummation, toward which it was directed from the very beginning. God reveals Himself in Christ as the one who brings the consummation of salvation, but not by proclaiming through Jesus certain doctrines concerning salvation or the way to attain it, but by making salvation a reality through Him. He reveals His plans for the redemption of mankind by realizing them. The history of Jesus itself is the completion of the revelation of salvation, beginning with His call to enter upon His mission given Him at the Jordan and

enabling Him to do this Messianic work, down to the Cross, upon which He finishes the salvation of the world. That His death did not show His work to be a failure or that He was conquered by His enemies; that it was only the council of God that put Him into the hands of His enemies, so that He should through His death complete what He had begun in His life, all this is proved by His resurrection on the third day. But He was not awakened to life upon the earth; His resurrection means for Him the transfer to the right hand of God, and thereby He is enabled victoriously to complete the work He had begun on earth. In the Mediator, who has been exalted to divine glory God gives the final security for the accomplishment of His plan of redemption. Through Him God can establish His kingdom upon earth; through Him, when this earth shall have shared the common destiny of all that is temporal and passes away, He can bring about His heavenly kingdom in which the highest purposes of religion are realized, and men are brought to a blessed union with God. In the history of Jesus the absolute proof is furnished that all of the revelations of God are revelations of deeds.

5. **The General Outpouring of the Spirit.**—Because the revelation in Christ appears as deeds it can accomplish its purpose when these deeds are recognized in their significance and lead to the certainty that Christ is the Mediator of Salvation, that His work is the completion of all the previous revelations. For this reason Christ constantly explains His earthly activity, which policy of Christ, however, finds itself checked before the completion of His work in the inability of His disciples to understand Him (John xvi. 13). These disciples He selected to be His most intimate associates in His earthly career, so that He could send them to His people to preach His gospel (Mark iii. 14). It is only after He has become the exalted one, to whom all the power of heaven and earth belongs, that He sends His disci-

ples out to all the nations (Matt. xxviii. 18-19). As the preparatory revelation of God could attain its purposes only when the Prophets interpreted its meaning, in the same way the Apostles are sent out to proclaim that He who had died and risen again is the Redeemer of the world. As the Prophets of the Old Covenant, thus the Apostles had to be prepared for the work of their mission by the Holy Ghost, and their inspiration furnished the certainty of the correctness of their understanding of the revelation that has reached its highest phase in the person and the history of Jesus. The divine influence that inspires them is not a magical act. In the earthly association of Jesus with His disciples He produced within them the ability of receiving this influence, and therein this divine influence finds its psychological connecting link. This inspiration is not produced by a mechanical imparting of certain new truths; the Holy Ghost leads them into all truth by declaring unto them that Savior whose career here upon earth was a part of their experience, i. e., teaches them to understand Him in His perfect glory (John xvi. 13-14). The Apostle Paul, being called at a later period, also had to be appointed to the Apostleship by the personal appearance of Christ on the way to Damascus (1 Cor. ix. 1), where it pleased God to reveal to him His Son, that he might preach His gospel (Gal. i. 15-19). But unlike the Prophets of the Old Covenant, the Apostles had not only the duty to interpret the revelation acts of God, but also in a prophetic way to point to the final consummation of the redemption given in God's revelation. The final revelation of Christ (1 Cor. i. 7) is His return in glory, in which He will reveal Himself as the finisher of salvation by the very act of bringing about this consummation. Then, too, the glory prepared for us in the plan of God will be realized in us (Rom. viii. 18) in so far as we, too, shall be revealed with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4). That which God has prepared for those who love Him He

has revealed to His Apostles through the Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 9-10).

In all these things there is nothing that distinguishes the Apostles from the Old Testament Prophets. It is the same Spirit that gave testimony to the Prophets concerning the sufferings that Jesus was to endure, and also concerning the glory that was to follow, which also now declares the joyful tidings of the salvation that has already been achieved in them (1 Pet. i. 11-12). What distinguishes the New Testament stage of revelation from that of the Old Testament is not the inspiration of those who were called to proclaim the truth of redemption, but the fact that this inspiration became general in character. Of this completion of inspiration Old Testament prophesy has already spoken (Joel iii. 1 sqq.). Peter declares that this prediction was fulfilled in the communication of the Spirit to all believers (Acts ii. 17-18). This is the final redemptive act of God, in which He manifests Himself as the finisher of the work of Christ. The inner experience of this communication of the Spirit finishes for the individual believer the certainty of the salvation given in Christ and of his participation in it. None can call Jesus the Lord except through the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. xii. 3). Only the Spirit can give us the certainty that the Exalted Christ is our own Mediator of Salvation. The Spirit Himself bears witness to our Spirit that we are the children of God (Rom. viii. 16); that in consequence of His redemptive work we have entered into the normal relations to God, have become the object of His love, so that we can now appeal to Him as our Father in childlike faith (Rom. viii. 15). It is the Spirit that teaches us to understand completely the will of God, and at the same time works in us the power to fulfill this will (Rom. viii. 14). In the Spirit we have the pledge of the completion of redemption in the world to come (2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13-14), because He who has given us this greatest of gifts has also there-

with given us the promise that He will bring us to the goal that has been marked out.

With this the last question has also been answered, as to the way in which we can recognize revelation, and especially the revelation of redemption, as that which it is and which it claims to be. If this consisted in the communication of supernaturally revealed doctrines, there would in reality be no means of making us certain that revelation is what it claims to be and what it is. Appeal is indeed often made to miracles and prophecies, but Lessing has already correctly said that even the most noteworthy miracles could not furnish the evidence for the truth of a doctrine; and prophecies could be such proofs only if they were what they in reality are not, viz., predictions of single events yet to occur. And since, finally, historical criticism has called into question the reality of miracles it prophecies, only he can cling to his faith in these who has recognized them as essential elements of revelation, i. e., who believes in revelation and hence does not require any further evidence for this belief. When revelation is understood in its real character, there is no need of this problem at all. Rothe correctly says that it would be the same as the question how light can be recognized as light. Light is recognized as such by seeing it. In the same way revelation is recognized as such by the fact that it reveals God, i. e., it produces the knowledge of God, which proves itself to be true and life-giving when it satisfies our deepest religious needs and makes us capable and willing to do God's will. The revelation of redemption is recognized by the very fact that it breaks the fetters of sin within us and makes us lost creatures sure of salvation in time and in eternity. If the imparting of the Spirit constitutes for the present time the completion of the revelation of redemption of God, then we can be sure of this salvation if we are in possession of the Spirit; and this assurance we have unless we feel the workings of the Spirit. Paul does

not propose to found his gospel proclamation on the persuasive words of wisdom, but on the proof which the Holy Spirit and the works that the Spirit does furnish. Our faith is not to rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God (1 Cor. ii. 4-5). This power of God we feel when true religion has been realized in us, and then we know that the revelation which has accomplished this is the true revelation. Its works in us that testify of its divine power is the witness of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER III

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

1. **The Old Testament.**—The entire New Testament bases its message on the preparatory revelation of salvation in Israel, which is recognized as pointing to the consummation of revelation in Christ. But the redemptive acts of God, in which this revelation appeared, the interpretation of these through the Prophets, who revealed the will of God and His plans of salvation for the peoples of their times as well as for the future, the New Testament know only through the writings of the Old Testament, which narrate the former and record the latter (John v. 38-39). These writings, in which God had been promised by His Prophets beforehand what is fully revealed in the gospel, are called “sacred” writings by the Apostle Paul (Rom. i. 2), because they were from God, because God has given them to His people for the purpose of declaring unto them both His promises and His commands. This primarily refers, of course, to all of the revelations of God in the narrow sense, which are recorded in the Scriptures, to the words which God spoke through Moses and the Prophets. When the Scribes, in their traditions, insist upon something that is contrary to the written law of Moses, they thereby make the word of God of none effect (Mark vii. 10 sqq.). Because Israel possesses the Law, it has been entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom. iii. 2), and is acquainted with all that the Prophets have spoken (Matt. i. 22). The Word of God, which, according to Rom. ix. 6, is not to become void, is immediately in the following verses explained by citations from the Scriptures. That which is

written in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Christ must be fulfilled (Luke xxiv. 44) because it is the Word of God. The Psalmist's word of admonition coming from the mouth of David (Heb. iv. 7), as also what the epistle to the Hebrews says by way of command is a Word of the Lord (Heb. iv. 12), since such men as Moses, David and the Prophets were the called recipients and mediators of the divine revelations. But the entire complex of writings, in which these divine revelations are handed down, is called "The Scriptures" by the New Testament. That Jesus knew the Scriptures of the Old Testament in the completeness with which this has been handed down to us is seen from Matt. xxiii. 35, where he cites an example from the first and from the last of these books.

The Apostles considered the Scriptures exclusively from the religious point of view. They do not ask what the writers of these books intended to say to their contemporaries at the time when they wrote, but solely what the Scriptures want to tell us by these writings. That which is written in the book of Leviticus concerning the stages of Israel's wanderings in the desert has been written for our instruction, i. e., as is explained by 1 Cor. x. 11, for those who live in the time of redemption, for which all the preceding periods are preparatory steps. What the Scriptures report concerning the faith of Abraham has not been written for his sake, i. e., not for the purpose of reporting how he was justified, but for our sakes, who are thereby to learn what the original order of God for the justification of men was (Rom. iv. 22). What the Psalm prophesies concerning the sufferings of Christ has been written for our instruction. (Rom. xv. 4). From this point of view the Law as it is recorded in Deut. xxv. 4 cannot have been written for the sake of the oxen; it was written for our sakes in order to instruct us in reference to the special ordinance of God therein contained (1 Cor. ix. 9). There can be no doubt that

the Apostle Paul, who was thoroughly versed in the Scriptures, knew as well as we know that these words in the first sense are to be understood literally; but they would not be found in the Scriptures that are destined for the salvation to come if it were not possible to draw from them by allegorical interpretation a meaning that has a significance for us. In Galatians iv. and 2 Corinthians iii. also the Apostle interprets Old Testament narrative allegorically; and it was superfluous to worry about the fact that Moses would have purposely deceived the people if he had intended by the veil upon his countenance to hide from the people the transitory character of the Old Testament Law (2 Cor. iii. 13). Paul knew as well as we that neither Moses nor the people suspected in the least what he by allegorical interpretations finds in the glory of the face of Moses, but for Paul this history written for us has a significance only if it is interpreted as he does. The Epistle to the Hebrews also sees in the reports of the Scriptures on the arrangements of the Ark of the Covenant the purpose to make known that at those times the way to the heavenly sanctuary was not yet open (Heb. ix. 8). Because the Scriptures do not mention either the parents of Melchizedek or his descent or the beginning of his life or its close the Apostle recognizes their purpose to make him a type of the eternal Son of God.

From this point of view we are to understand why it is that as a rule the question is not asked, what this or that person says in the Scriptures, but what the Scriptures say, although other passages also show that the New Testament writers know full well what Moses and what the different prophets wrote. Hence comes the peculiar usage, according to which the whole Old Testament is called the Law, i. e., is designated as the norm. Even the Psalms are referred to by Rom. iii. 19 and the word of prophecy found in 1 Cor. xiv. 21. In the same way in John xv. 23 a citation from the Psalms is declared to be written in the Law; and Jesus

says in reference to just such a passage, John x. 35: "The Scriptures cannot be broken," just as He says this concerning the Law in Matt. v. 17: "It is written," is everywhere regarded as the final authority. As a rule such an appeal to the Scriptures, more or less consciously, is based upon the presupposition that these are words which God has spoken through the mouths of His prophets (Jer. i. 9); but particularly the Epistle to the Hebrews in a number of cases (e. g., i. 6, vii. 8) cites from the Scriptures as Words of God passages that speak of God in the third person, and are accordingly not reported as having been spoken by God. In the case of Paul it is often hard to determine whether he quotes God or the Scriptures as speaking. Expressly he discusses in Gal. iii. 8 the question, why the Scriptures predict something to Abraham, although the matter under consideration is simply an old promise of God; and in Gal. iii. 22 the very thing is stated of the Scriptures that in Rom. xi. 32 is said of God. But this passage shows why this is done. It is the Scriptures through whose infallible statements we learn that all human activity is by God concluded under the power of sin, so that we can learn that the promises of redemption can not be gained through the deeds of men.

This personification of the Scriptures, as well as its identification with God, according to which it is one and the same whether the Scriptures or God says something, is based upon the fact that at bottom it is God who has given us the Scriptures, in so far as, according to His counsel and will, for the purpose of preserving His revelation among men, it has been laid down in the Scripture how He has formerly revealed Himself. And this is the case with the entire Scriptures, although the statement that the Scriptures are the Word of God is nowhere directly made. But a distinction between a word of God in the Scriptures and something there contained that is not of God is entirely foreign to the New Testament, and is in so far irrelevant, since with this

distinction, which only we make, the authority of the Scriptures, upon which we lay so much emphasis, is undermined. Equally foreign to the New Testament is also the idea that everything that the Old Testament writers penned was imparted to them in form and contents. This idea originated in the presupposition that it is the purpose of the Holy Scriptures to transmit religious doctrines and demands in a supernatural way, and this conception of inspiration was a necessary development of the idea that the Scriptures must furnish the guarantee for these teachings, since contents and forms, in the nature of things, were considered inseparable. In that case the Scriptures themselves would be the revelation which consists in the imparting of such doctrines, which idea always turns out to be a false conception of the character and nature of redemption; and since this from beginning to end points to Christ, Jesus can say that these Scriptures testify of Him (John v. 39).

That the New Testament with its actual identification of the Scriptures and the Word of God does not intend to claim that the very words of the Scriptures have passed from the mouth of God to the writers, is proved by the phenomenal freedom in the way in which New Testament writers make citations, who sometimes omit, sometimes add to or change; which, under the presupposition of God's dictation of the words, would have been a falsification of these. In the same way the indifference of these writers over against the relation of the original text to the Greek translation, even in the case of those who, unlike the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, certainly are not acquainted with the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, as also in the case of Paul and the first Evangelist, who according to free choice sometimes follow the original text and sometimes the translation, show this. But even if the New Testament writers would have wanted to or been able to adhere most stringently to the original text, this text, since it at that time contained no

vowel or accents, would itself have been capable of different interpretations, and that entirely independent of the question as to the extent to which the Massoretic text that they had in hand was perfect or not. A text fully reliable and capable of only *one* interpretation and thereby a Word of God handed down in its very words with absolute reliability did accordingly not exist for them. This identification of the Scriptures with the Word of God can only mean this, that God everywhere in the Scriptures speaks to us. It is He who commands us to use this record of the preparatory revelation of redemption for the purpose for which all of the revelations have been given, namely to awaken or to strengthen our religious life and for the fulfillment of His will (2 Tim. iii. 15-16). But this object is attained just through the purely human element in the Scriptures, in so far as this pictures to us vividly the impression which the divine revelations made upon their recipients. Thereby he speaks to us to-day yet as He once spoke to them.

2. **Its Inspiration.**—The false conception of the nature of the Scriptures was based on their inspiration, by which term was understood a special miraculous act by which the authors of the Scriptures received from the Holy Ghost the impulse to write, as also the contents of what they were to write and further the expression of this by the exact words. The New Testament knows nothing of such a miraculous act. What it calls inspiration is something much higher than this single miraculous act. It is the divine spiritual activity, through which God enables the disciples He calls to become the witnesses of His redemptive revelation. David spoke by the Holy Spirit (Mark xii. 36); the Holy Ghost spoke through Isaiah (Acts xxviii. 25), when in Hebrews iii. 7 a citation from the Psalms is introduced with the words: "The Holy Ghost saith." It is further explained in iv. 7 what *God* purposed to say in these words through David. Naturally the prophetic word handed down in the Scriptures is

no less inspired than was that spoken with the mouth. According to 2 Pet. i. 19, we have a prophetic word in the Scriptures, in order that we may make use of it for the purpose for which it has been given us; but what is said in 2 Pet. i. 20 of every prophecy of the Scriptures; this is not based upon that which men, moved by the Holy Ghost, wrote, but upon what they have spoken (2 Pet. i. 21). In Acts i. 16, it is said for passage in the Scriptures, it, i. e., that which is prophesied therein, had been spoken by the Holy Ghost; yet the words that are added, "through the mouth of David," shows that the author has in mind a prophecy spoken by him. Not because the historical books of the Old Testament are inspired, but because the writing of the sacred history is an essential part of the preparatory stage of redemptive revelation, and because for this reason those who write them, are equally inspired with the Prophets and the Psalm singer, therefore these books are from the Holy Ghost, who in the description given of the details of the Tabernacle gives those hints which Heb. ix. 8 finds there. Because the writing of these books constitutes only the completion of the revelation process, because it is their object to preserve the redemptive revelation for the coming generation, they are in 2 Tim. iii. 15 called "Sacred Scriptures." And when in 2 Tim. iii. 16 they are called "inspired," this does not mean to declare the infallibility of each and every word, upon which the old theory of inspiration is based, but purposes only to emphasize the utility of the Scriptures for the religious moral life, the beginning and development of which is the purpose of the redemptive revelation. It is in vain to appeal to the fact that Paul in Gal. iii. 16 bases his argument upon the exact reading of the very word in Gen. xiii. 15. What he according to his method of interpretation deduces from that passage is generally acknowledged not to be drawn from the exact wording of this text, but from his

interpretation of it, which is different in Rom. iv. 13, 18, and here is undoubtedly the correct idea.

The theory of a special inspiration of the Scriptures not only cannot be proved but contradicts facts that lie on the surface in the Old Testament. The historical books do not report that which the Spirit imparted to the writer. They in many cases mention their sources, and where this is not done the different methods of presentation of the same facts shows that these are based on different oral or written traditions. Contradictory statements in the genealogical and historical accounts exclude the possibility of absolute inerrant reports, which the old theory purposes to establish. The same appears from the naive ideas entertained by these books on matters pertaining to the natural sciences. It certainly cannot be said that these ideas are of no religious significance. When the book of Joshua proceeds from the mistaken idea that the sun goes around the earth, then the miracle there reported that the sun stood still cannot have taken place as there claimed (Joshua x. 12-13). The prophetic books only in exceptional cases mention the person by whom they were compiled and arranged. Undoubted indications go to show, that in many cases prophecies from different periods are arranged together; that later prophecies are ascribed to earlier prophets, as is done in the case of Second Isaiah; or that earlier prophecies are ascribed to later prophets, as is done with a part of the book of Zachariah. In the book of Psalms particularly this theory even deprives these lyrics of their character as products of revelation. If those outpourings of religious feeling are not the product of their human authors, but have been dictated to the writer by the Spirit, then every effect of these joyful songs of praise, every heartfelt prayer of repentance, those testimony of an heroic trust in God and His divine and providential help, every declaration of the sin-pardoning grace of God are lost for us. Only if they are

regarded as the expression of personal conviction can they testify what the Old Testament revelation of redemption achieved in real men and thereby also can work in us what it is their purpose to effect. The same is true of the didactic poetry of the *gnomé* literature in Israel. Only if these show how the preparatory revelation of God taught men to judge and to regulate life, can they produce in us the same religious wisdom of life, which Heb. xii. 5 sqq. states was their purpose.

The emphasis placed upon the purely human element in the Old Testament does not hinder but rather helps their influence as the official records of the divine revelation of redemption. If the historical method of Biblical research has taught us to look upon the Old Testament in a different light than that which the New Testament evinces regarding these books in looking upon them solely from the view of their religious importance, then this, correctly used, can only place the significance of the Old Testament in a clearer light. The more that science makes clear the development of religion in Israel, the more it appears that this life unfolds itself only gradually out of the last influences of heathendom, which had its origin in the misunderstanding and neglect of the original revelation, until these influences were finally victoriously overcome and finally produced the most outspoken and radical hostility to all heathen ideas, all the clearer do we therein recognize the efforts of the gradual development of the divine revelation of redemption. The latter does not purpose to force a perfect religion upon the people, which, having no roots in them, shall produce only a theoretical knowledge and an external culture; it aims rather in an historical manner to produce the true religion in Israel, taking it to that period when the perfected revelation of redemption in Christ can step in and complete what has been begun. The clearer the Old Testament is recognized as the records of this preliminary redemptive

revelation the higher its religious significance in the New Testament scenes becomes for us.

3. **The New Testament.**—In the last quarter of the second century all New Testament writings were put on the level with sacred writings of the Old Testament, as had been done first with the prophetic book of the New Testament and then with the gospels. And rightfully so. Quite naturally the New Testament itself does not furnish us any proofs for this; for when the assertion is made that in 1 Tim. v. 18, the gospel of St. Luke, and in Pet. iii. 15, the Pauline Epistles are put on the same level with the Old Testament, this would if it were the case show that these books are not genuine. But in the former case it is only the Word of the Lord reported in Luke x. 7, that is regarded as equal to the Word of God in the Old Testament. In the same way in the latter passage the Letters of Paul, whose characterization alone through the wisdom he displays suffices to show how little the author thinks of placing him on the level of the Old Testament writings, are only mentioned in connection with these writings because certain persons twist their admonitions and abuse them as they do these books. The justification for us lies, on the other hand, exclusively in this, that as a matter of fact the New Testament is just as much the record of the perfected revelation of redemption as the Old Testament is that of the preparatory stage. Therefore the former opens with the Gospels, that report the history of Jesus, in which this revelation was realized. Of course this is not done in a manner that makes everything depend upon an authentic and detailed account of this history, which then would be distributed among four books with such remarkable agreements and such remarkable disagreements, out of which a uniform account of the history of Jesus can be construed only through scientific research. The three older Gospels contain the traditions of the doings and the sayings of

Jesus as these reports were current and were written down in the congregation, in order to make His religious importance clear to the readers and to influence their religious life. The only gospel that was written by an eye-witness evidently has as its purpose not to narrate this history as such, but to make clear the deepest significance of the person and the history of Jesus and openly declare its didactic and hortatory purpose (John xx. 30-31). But for this very reason, the gospels just as they are, are especially adapted to reproduce the impression which the revelation of God that appeared in the life of Jesus made on all sides, and to transmit this to readers of future ages. With the Gospels are connected the Acts, which reports and utilizes in the interests of edification the redemptive plan of God as this was being realized in the development of the Church.

The apostolic letters are writings for their times and people and for that reason but poorly adapted to furnish a uniform religious system of doctrine. The average catechism would accomplish this end better and more completely than these letters. But just as they are these letters carry us into the religious life of the first congregations, showing how these originated and were directed by the preaching of the revelation of God in Christ; how they struggle with the former heathen or Jewish life; they show us the bright and the dark sides of these congregations, how their manifold needs could be met only by a further renewal of the proclamation of the gospel. Here we become acquainted with the representatives and hearers of this gospel, each one in his individuality as this has been produced by the revelation of God in Christ that they had experienced in their own hearts; and we hear them interpret these revelations of salvation in their basal principles and their consequences, see them utilize these for admonition, comfort, promise and threats for the unfolding of the religious life in the congregations amid their varied surroundings. Therefore, too, they are

by their very nature suited to bring us into a living contact with the revelation of redemption, to make this effective for us also and for our varied surroundings, which are essentially the same as those that prevailed in the first congregations. The only prophetic book in the New Testament contains prophecies of the future that aim to strengthen faith, admonish to patience, and revive the hope of the Christian. This it does not do if we regard this book as a collection of oracles and predictions of certain events in the future, but only as a book which, like the prophetic books of the Old Testament, contains a proclamation of the divine redemptive plans; when we leave to the future the question as to the manner in which these are to be fulfilled. If it is the peculiarity of every document referring to the past that we can, as it were, live over again what it reports, and can vividly experience what the first actors felt, then the New Testament, as it is, must be regarded as the most perfect record of the revelation in Christ.

Correctly do we call the New Testament the Word of God as we do the Old, but only when we understand this in that sense which the New Testament itself suggests. The Evangelist call the proclamation of Jesus the word of God, (Luke v. 1, viii. 11; John xvii. 14-17), but not in the sense as though this proclamation had been given to Him in its exact words, but because he declares the saving counsel of God that was being realized in His coming and thereby the revelation of God was being consummated. The Apostles designate their oral preaching as the word of God (Rom. x. 17; 1 Cor. xiv. 36; Heb. xiii. 7; 1 John ii. 24), or as the gospel of God, i. e., the joyous message coming from God (Rom. i. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 17), because it proclaims the mighty deeds of God, which have been done in and through Christ, in which God has completely revealed Himself. God sends through them His message of what He has done for our salvation and what we are to do in order to partake of this

salvation. When the Apostles attribute directly to their preaching what in the Old Testament is written concerning the word of God (Rom. iv. 8; 1 Pet. i. 25), they thereby not only confirm perfectly the sense in which the Old Testament has been called the word of God, but they give us too the full right to apply this to the New Testament also. For we no longer possess the oral proclamation of the Apostles; all that we know of this we learn from their discourses in the Acts and from the apostolic letters. And of the doings and sayings of the Lord we know only what the Evangelists have handed down to us. If God has revealed Himself through Him and through the Apostles, then we can learn of this revelation only through the New Testament. This book would have passed over the world like a shining meteor, which, after it is extinguished, leaves nothing behind save utter darkness, had God not seen to it that these records of this revelation had been handed down. In these records He sends us the message of the salvation in Christ and of the way to this salvation; in these he still speaks to us to-day. Here, too, no distinction can be made between the word of God and the human form in which it is clothed. By the very fact that the revelation comes to us in living personalities, in whom we can see and feel the impression that this revelation has made on them, it becomes effective for us and a power-working word of God. Quite naturally here too it is not possible that He dictated the very words to them which they spoke; such a dictation would have no power to produce in us what in them was possible only through personal experience. Only life can bring forth life.

4. **Its Inspiration.**—Jesus has promised to all true disciples and not only to the twelve His spirit (John xiv. 15-16), who should bring to remembrance all He had said to them (John xiv. 26), and lead them into all truth (John xvi. 13). When this spirit would come, then streams of living waters would flow from them in order to communicate

to others the saving truth that they had experienced (John vii. 38-39); through this spirit would be given to them what and *how* they were to speak (Matt. x. 19-20). This naturally does not mean that the Holy Spirit would give them the very words they were to utter. When Paul expresses his conviction that he has received not only the contents but also the form of what he speaks from the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. ii. 12-13), here the contrast with the words of human wisdom shows what is meant. No human wisdom whispers to the speaker the very words he utters; it can only teach him to find the right words for what he intends to say. What is here said of the oral proclamation of the disciples, can naturally be applied to them also when they write letters and gospels. Just as sure as this latter is a part of their divinely appointed mission, just so surely this inspiration did enable them in their writings to interpret the revelation of God in Christ correctly and completely to declare the saving counsel of God that has been made manifest in Him. But not a word is said of that unique miraculous act, by virtue of which it is claimed that these writings originated and which unjustly claims for itself alone the name of inspiration. To accept such an act would involve the contradiction, that the author of the Acts, in reporting the discourses of the Apostles had been deemed worthy of a higher inspiration than the Apostles themselves were when they spoke these discourses; that the separation of the Apostles from their congregations, which compelled them to resort to epistolary intercourse with them, proved to be a greater blessing than their presence was, since they now received the inspired letters of the Apostles instead of the addresses of the inspired Apostles transmitted in a human way. The New Testament further knows of no acme of inspiration which had been bestowed upon the Apostles or the New Testament writers. In 1 Pet. i. 12 the persons spoken of as preaching the gospel are doubtlessly others than the Apos-

bles; and yet their proclamation is described as having been given them through the medium of the Holy Ghost. Paul means to say merely that *he, too*, possesses the Spirit of God (1 Cor. vii. 40), and just he it is that teaches so prominently the bestowal of the Spirit to all believers as a mark of the final consummation of the redemptive work of Christ (Tit. iii. 6-7). This naturally does not exclude that the effect of this Spirit, in accordance with the receptivity, the ability and the calling of the individual, differs, and that those who according to the purpose of God were called to transmit to us the records of the perfect revelation of redemption were especially called and prepared for this purpose by God; but it does not demand that these writings originated through a special miraculous act, as is claimed by the traditional theory of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Indeed the character of the New Testament books excludes this idea as much as do those of the Old Testament. It was not a special activity on the part of God that gave the New Testament author the impetus to write. The Evangelists in an unmistakable manner make mention of the purely human motive for their writing (Luke i. 1-4; John xx. 30-31), just as the authors of the letters in the New Testament find in the state of affairs in their congregations the occasion for these epistles. The materials of which the Evangelists make use were not given to them in a supernatural way. They themselves refer either directly (Luke i. 2-3), or at least indirectly by their literal reproduction from older sources to the sources whence they have been drawn. The difference in the character, plan and method of presentation between these writings unmistakably comes from purely literary motives. The fact that some apostolic letters have been lost (1 Cor. v. 9, and Col. iv. 16), prove that these letters as such or because of their origin were not regarded as unique writings nor that they had a special divine purpose based on such a uniqueness. The contents

of the Epistles also shows that they were not specially inspired by God. The remarkable expression of religious experiences and feelings (cf. e. g. Rom. vii. 7 sqq.; viii. 31-32); the expression of individual feelings toward the congregations, such as are found in the warm rebukes and in the warnings against dangerous deceivers (cf. especially 2 Cor. and Gal.), become inner untruths and lose their effect if they have not originated in personal experience but were dictated to the writer by the Spirit. Paul corrects himself and presupposes that he may in the future forget something (1 Cor. i. 16). The Epistles contain a mass of purely personal matter of external character, such as greetings, orders, direction to bring a cloak and books from Troas (cf. 2 Tim. iv. 13). The Epistle to Philemon, as also 3 John, consist almost entirely of such matters. The Apocalypse for the portraiture of its vision makes use of purely literary arts and adaptations of Old Testament pictures. The complete passivity of the authors presupposed by the older theory is in contradiction to the individual differences observed in the methods of presenting the teachings of the gospel down to matters of language and style.

The absurdities to which this theory may lead are seen in the debate between the Purists and the Hebraists, the former of whom would vindicate for the honor of the Holy Spirit the classical character of the Greek of the New Testament books. If every word in the New Testament Scriptures is dictated by the Holy Spirit then, too, these books must necessarily have been handed down in an absolutely correct form. It was this feeling that suggested the thought that the *textus receptus* is to be regarded as inspired. We, however, know that this text, prepared with perfectly inadequate means, is full of mistakes, and some of these not without importance for the sense. Scientific investigation has been diligently at work to correct the text; but no scholar can boast that he has restored the original text with in-

fallible certainty. The New Testament is written in a language not known to those peoples of the future for which it was written. The very fact that the oldest text does not separate the words by spaces and marks of punctuation, and still more the methods of expression, so difficult at times, admit the possibility of different translations. Without a specially inspired translation no people would possess a perfectly intelligible reproduction of the original word of God in the sense of the old inspiration theory. The Catholic Church knew what she was doing in declaring the Latin Vulgate as an authentic translation, but even this version is written in a language not understood by modern peoples. And even in the best translation the individual words must first be interpreted if the purpose of that supposed miraculous origin of the Scriptures is to be attained. We do not possess for this interpretation the infallible authority claimed by the Catholic Church; and if we did possess this, then such a miracle would become a perfectly superfluous thing, since, if such an authority would be in the possession of the truth, it would not be necessary to search for this in the writings of the New Testament. Notwithstanding all this the old theory of inspiration of the Scriptures is perfectly correct from its standpoint. If revelation consists in the supernatural communication of religious truths and doctrines and if the Sacred Scriptures are the means for its declaration, then there must be tradition infallible in its very words, and this can be secured only through such miraculous inspiration. It is perfectly useless to try to modernize or remove the rough edges from this old inspiration theory. It is only by such a theory that the entire infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures can be guarded, something that is demanded from its standpoint.

5. The Perfection of the Scriptures.—The New Testament, however, as little as the Old possesses the inerrancy claimed by the old inspiration theory. The New Testament

writers share the same general world of thought prevalent in their times; and must do so, or they would not have been understood by their contemporaries for whom they wrote, if they would have had different ideas than their readers on matters of geography, history or the phenomena of nature. It is not possible for any system of harmony to remove all the contradictions in the accounts given by the Evangelists of certain events in the life of Christ, all the peculiarities in the reproduction of the sayings of the Lord, all the differences between the Acts and the Pauline Letters; there certainly must be an error somewhere, as, e. g., in the case of proper names (Matt. xxvii. 9; Mark ix. 26) or numbers (1 Cor. x. 8; Gal. iii. 17). It does not help matters to say that these are mere externals that do not touch the religious sphere; for if it is maintained that every word in the Scriptures has been dictated by the Holy Ghost, then such difficulties cannot have occurred, and then error in matter pertaining to the natural sciences or to history can easily affect the religious sphere also. If it is really the case that the ideas concerning certain sicknesses healed by Christ are based on false notions of the times, then the reported driving of devils are something else than what the Evangelists see in them. It is a purely historical question if the Psalms were written by those men to whom the Old Testament ascribes them; but in these cases where the way of utilizing these Psalms is based on such authorship, e. g., that of a certain Psalm of David (Mark xii. 31-32; Acts ii. 25-31), here certainly there are religious interests also involved. Whether the contents of the book of Jonah, in accordance with the views of the New Testament times are regarded as historical or as a didactic poem; whether Old Testament predictions are to be taken as directly or only typically Messianic, are certainly purely problems of learned research, which are, however, not without importance for the lessons that the New Testament has taken from them.

The whole interpretation method of the New Testament writers could be none other than that of their own times, partly because they could not yet have attained to our method and partly because any other would not have been intelligible to their readers. It is for this reason that they never take the connection of thought into consideration, the purpose or the historical surroundings, amidst which the Old Testament passages cited by them were written, something that scientific Bible interpretation does and must do; but they merely take the words as they stand, which brings with it frequently a departure from the original sense. Indeed it here appears with clearness how the current proof for the inspiration of the New Testament moves in a deceptive circle, when the passages claimed in the New Testament as evidence for the inspiration of the Old Testament are applied to include the New Testament also. For not until inspiration of the latter has been established can it be demonstrated that the New Testament statements concerning the inspiration of the Old Testament are infallible. But the New Testament writers do not declare themselves to be infallible. Even in religious matters Paul declares that he knows in part (1 Cor. iii. 9); and when he in Gal. ii. 11-17, in a religious problem of great importance for his day antagonizes the view of Peter and charges him with hypocrisy, he certainly did not consider him infallible.

But this postulate of inerrancy is in itself based on a false conception of the character of the New Testament. The New Testament is not a codex of doctrines, which transmits to us in a correct form a sum of ideas and teachings necessary to salvation, but it furnishes the testimony of the divine revelation of redemption in Jesus, which it teaches us to know and to understand completely in its significance. It is able to do this through the personal attitude of its authors to the acts of God in which this revelation took place and through the inspiration that taught them correctly

to understand and describe these. But they can only furnish the evidence in an effective manner when they demonstrate in their own personal religious life what the revelation of redemption is to work. Now they do not themselves claim that they are already sinless (James iii. 2; 1 John i. 8); and it lies in the nature of the case, that the wealth of the divine revelation of redemption can be appropriated by the individual not completely but only in accordance with his character and life and the religious needs of his nature. And then this appropriation, in accordance with the law of historical development, can take place only in a gradually progressive manner. But the fact that a single book or a single author does not show forth to its full extent the effect of the redemptive revelation of God does not say, that we thereby receive from these a false interpretation thereof or an insufficient instruction concerning the way of life. The absolute perfection of the Scriptures is rather to be found in this, that the revelation of redemption as it has become effective individually and historically in them is just thereby adapted to satisfy the varied individual religious needs and is able to awaken and to develop religious life at all stages. The records of the redemptive revelation can have no other purpose than this revelation itself, and that is actually to bring about the salvation that is rooted in religious life.

And from this conception it becomes clear why we do not need an infallible authority for interpretation. The Scriptures interpret themselves. This principle, understood as an Hermeneutical rule, can lead to serious misinterpretations. But the Scriptures do not exist merely for the learned; everybody is to understand them and experience their saving power. And to effect this a good translation amply suffices, even if not perfectly correct in all details. The Sacred Scriptures, even if the reader lacks understanding for its history or its accounts of the religious life that pulsates in them, can yet awaken the same kind of life and can open

up in all essential points the understanding of salvation and the way to life. Even if not a few things are yet beyond comprehension, the reader who is really searching for redemption will always find enough that is perfectly clear and will gradually, too, understand what was to him a mystery at first. A good deal depends in this matter upon taking the Scriptures as a whole and not arbitrarily isolating certain passages, in order to barricade oneself against everything else, as the Samaritans closed their eyes to all prophetic revelations and were for this reason declared by Jesus not to know God. If it was the purpose of God that the Scriptures should show forth a variety of forms of religious consciousness and life, then these are mutually to supplement and determine each other more closely. Not one of these forms is in itself incorrect or misleading, but it becomes such if we are determined to regard it as in itself and alone sufficient and decline to receive other forms as its necessary complement and foundation. Each one can awaken a beginning of new life, but this life must grow and take root if it is to develop into a full appropriation of the revelation in Christ and of the salvation that is given in this revelation, and this can be accomplished only if we make use of the entire Scriptures.

Naturally the Scriptures will be used only as they want to be used if we are convinced that they are the records of the divine revelation of redemption. But no scientific demonstration is capable of proving this. All that has been learned through history as to the origin of the Scriptures, all that has been learned concerning the historical significance and the qualification of the New Testament writers, can only effect this, that we consider these books worthy of attention and of diligent study. But this may also arouse criticism and lead to a purely external investigation of the Scriptures, which brings no fruit for religious life. Only he who with a longing for redemption in his heart comes to

the Scriptures can experience this effect. This experience is the only unshaken proof that they are what they purpose to be. Just as revelation can only through its effects prove what it is, thus too the testimony of it in the New Testament writings can only prove itself by the effects it produces. Only he who has experienced that the Scriptures awaken in him a new religious life; that they break the bondage of sins that fetters him; that they bring peace in all the terrors of sin and of our daily life, only he knows what the Scriptures really are. Such an one does not need scientific proof, and his convictions cannot be shaken by any criticism. It is impossible in the very nature of the case, that the fact that a book that has the power of conviction can furnish the certainty that the doctrines it brings are divine revelation; and this the Scriptures would be forced to do, if it were their purpose to communicate a sum of ideas and of doctrines revealed by God. On the other hand, this specific effect can prove nothing for the divine miracle which the old inspiration theory employs. But the fact that they really attain the purpose in us which the records of a complete revelation of redemption alone can possibly work, proves absolutely that divine perfection, which can consist only in this, that they are what they claim to be and that they work what they are intended to work.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

1. **The Church and Theological Science.**—The New Testament is more than the immediate expression of the religious consciousness of its authors, strongly as this may at times appear. As the different books are generally written for their times and surroundings, they purpose in many cases to instruct their readers on special points of redemptive truth, to antagonize false ideas, to defend the truth against errors that had arisen. If the religion of the New Testament is based on the revelation of the redemption in Christ, then these books must be able to tell us what this redemption is that has been revealed in the New Testament; how it can be attained, and what it is to work in us. A religion that moves only in the world of feelings and reflections is unknown to the New Testament. Faith must express itself in confession, and this confession quite naturally centres on the person of Christ and its importance for us (Rom. x. 9-10). But if this matter is to be further explained, established or defended, then a distinct doctrinal formula for the person of Christ must be developed, in which the question is no longer the religion as such, but the theological understanding of the facts which constitute the basis of this religion. It is not merely a theoretical interest that leads to the development of such doctrinal formulas, but the purpose is to secure the results of the proclamation of redemption and to protect these against corruption. In these formulas religion becomes theology. The individual in whom the gospel proclamation has awakened faith and a new life does

not need any theology; but the communion that aims to preserve in its midst the proclamation of the truth of redemption for the purpose of edification, instruction and admonition of its members in its purity and strength, needs it. Accordingly we find already in the apostolic age that the process of theological dogma formulation has begun and is further developed, just as we also see in those times already new formulas of cultus being developed and the forms of ethical life in communions reorganized in accordance with the Christian spirit.

In the nature of the case this process must be continued in the further development of the Christian Church. Just as the latter is constantly engaged in bringing forth richer cultus forms for the cultivation of its religious life, just as she makes use of her religio-ethical impulses for a constant and further reconstruction of all the forms of social life, thus, too, she must for the instruction of her members and for her own justification in the eyes of the world and further for the conquest of the errors that are constantly ready to make themselves felt, give expression to the religious consciousness that has been awakened in her through the Holy Spirit in ever new forms of doctrines. In doing so she must find a connecting link with the spiritual life that she finds surrounding her, since she has as her purpose to spiritualize the latter with the new power of redemption and life that has been bestowed upon her and to utilize it for her faith. If she would fulfil this mission she cannot be content with the formulas of doctrines which primitive Christianity developed, as little as she can be with the cultus and social forms that the earliest congregation produced. But the further development can be achieved only through a constant interchange with the whole progress of the thought, morality and culture of the world, if the church would retain her influence on the latter. Naturally this historical process can be of a healthy character only then when it goes back

to the Sacred Scriptures as the source of new religious life and draws its motives from this head; but it cannot rest content with this. For this very reason the redemptive revelation in Christ was supplemented by the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit over the believers. The same Holy Spirit that inspired the official witnesses of salvation in Christ and in that way produced the New Testament, still is at work in the congregation of the believers and gives it the power constantly to develop new forms of doctrine, of the cultus and of ethical and social life.

But a real progress in historical development can not be achieved if every period is to begin anew under the guidance of the Spirit to draw these formulas out of the Scriptures. Just as progress in spiritual and ethical life in general can be brought about only when every period builds carefully upon the foundation laid by preceding generations. Thus, too, the Christian congregation must in its development appeal to tradition also. This tradition appears in the form of a tradition of doctrine, which places by the side of the forms of doctrine already expressed in the Scriptures the richer developments of later ages, just as this is the case with the traditions of the cultus and the tradition of Christian and moral and social life. The Christian life of the individual does not need tradition; and since this has as its only source the Sacred Scriptures, it must in principle decline to listen to tradition. But the church needs tradition for her further development. This development in accordance with the nature of things is not absolutely normal. The further the development of new forms of Christian doctrines and life is removed from the fountain of saving revelation in Christ, the more it is in danger of all kinds of corruption that originates in a false conception of the Sacred Scriptures as the only source of this revelation and which can also hinder the influence of the Holy Ghost in the church and congregation but cannot entirely destroy it.

But just for the reason that this development must take into consideration the intellectual development of the world as such, in order thereby to be able to influence the world in turn, it is only natural that foreign influences also make themselves felt in its progress. Just as it is necessary that the Church in her further unfolding in addition to the Scriptures dare not ignore tradition so surely, too, must this tradition be used only critically. But such criticism must have a fixed canon according to which it is exercised, and this canon cannot be found elsewhere than in the Sacred Scriptures, out of which the entire religious life of the Church is drawn. The object of this criticism cannot be to cut out everything in the forms of doctrine and life that is not yet found in the Scriptures; for this would make all further development impossible. Its purpose can consist only in excluding that which is contrary to the original formulas of doctrines and life taught in the Scriptures, because this difference is proof that such material has not been drawn from the fountain of the divine revelation in Christ, but are foreign matters. The Church is constantly called upon to examine, if the traditional forms of doctrine and life have been derived from the correctly understood interpretation of the Scriptures, or if they have been corrupted by the foreign influences that surround the Church.

2. **The Canon.**—When the Church became conscious of this mission, she had to meet the problem of the canon, i. e., the question, which of the books were entitled to be received into the codex of sacred writings and thus constitute *the* Sacred Scriptures, that were to be the norm for Christian consciousness and life. The Old Church never reached a decision in the principle according to which this was to be done, and did not do so for reasons that appear clearly in the history of the canon. Only at a late period and then more on account of the necessity of harmony on this matter, the different collections of sacred writings current in the

Oriental and the Occidental Church gradually became one codex, without a single conclusion being reached in this matter that was binding the whole Church. In this process the Old Testament quite naturally could no longer be made matter of debate, because the New Testament writers accepted this as normative substantially in the form in which it now is found, and regarded it as the record of the preparatory stage of redemption, and therefore by that very fact has it secured canonical authority for us. In reference to the New Testament Scriptures so much is in itself settled, that the writings of the Apostles as the official witnesses of God called and empowered by God to declare the revelation of redemption have this normative authority for us. But the official proclamation of the gospel was by no means confined to the Apostles. Pupils of the Apostles, such as Mark and Luke, were chosen by the Apostles themselves as their coadjutors. The brothers of the Lord, James and Jude, made journeys as evangelists (1 Cor. ix. 5), and even unknown men, such as the author of the first gospel and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, must have occupied high positions of influence in those circles for which they wrote. Finally it is clear that the canonical authority of these writings in reality depends less upon the persons who were their authors, than upon the fact that they belong to the times when the impression of the divine revelation in Christ was yet so fresh and original that the later developments of doctrines and life were measured by them.

The attempt to distinguish degrees of canonicity must fail for this reason, that the lives of many of the New Testament writers are too little known to enable us to judge how far they were capable by their character and careers to be reliable witnesses of the divine revelation in Christ. But the distinction in degrees of canonicity is really based on that false conception of the character of revelation, according to which it consists of a supernatural communication of re-

ligious ideas and doctrines, which are laid down in the Scriptures, and the correctness of which is to be measured by the Scriptures. When theological science through its historical criticism declares that this or that one among the New Testament books was not written by the apostle whose name it bears, or that this is at least a matter of doubt, this cannot affect its canonical authority, as long as it is settled that the book was at least written by a pupil of an apostle and in the apostolic times. But the question assumes a different character as soon as criticism is able to prove that a number of these writings originated in the second century, and even in the later times. For the abstract possibility, that there may have been men in these late times who, in consequence of peculiar circumstances, could have faithfully and in its purity preserved the original impress of revelation, cannot settle the matter for the life of the Church. If it has been proved of a certain book that it does not belong to those primitive times, which are normative for us, then it must be excluded from the canon. But just as confidently as this has been claimed at times, just as often have good reasons been brought out against the claim, and at any rate the Church cannot depend upon the learned discussions on this subject, which possibly may never reach a final conclusion.

Even the experience that the individual has of redemption is for him a sufficient guarantee that the New Testament is what it claims to be, this proof is valid only for the New Testament as a whole. Only in so far could this be significant when the one or the other of these writings proves itself not conducive to but hindering and misleading for the Christian consciousness and life that is produced in us through the other books. But how easily the judgment of an individual can err in this matter is shown by the careless and untenable judgments of Luther on the Epistle of James, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, which origi-

nated in his inability to understand these books and in his one-sided preferences for others. Certainly, too, on the other hand, the individual can easily fail to see what in some book might prove to be a disturbing element and contradict the religious consciousness that has been awakened. At any rate, the judgment of the individuals in this matter cannot be decisive for the Church. Even the judgment of the period that formed the canon can have a supplementary influence only. The plan has been suggested to return to the distinction between the Homologoumena and the Antilegomena that obtained at that period; but this distinction, both on account of its origin and its very doubtful justification, is entirely unsuited to determine even the grade of canonicity. True, the more it is recognized that the judgment of the Church as to which is to be regarded as normative, was based less on principle than on instinct, the more we will be inclined to believe, that it was the Providence of God, to which we are indebted for the very existence of the records of revelation, which also controlled the selection of these writings. To this must be added that every unprejudiced feeling tells us, that the final and unanimous exclusion of those writings that had so long struggled for reception into the canon, such as the Letter of Clement and of Barnabas, or even the Shepherd of Hermas, is based upon excellent tact of the Church.

3. **Exegesis.**—If the Scriptures are to serve as the norm for critical examination of all forms of doctrine and life in the Church, then they must themselves first be understood; and the indispensable means for this is methodical exegesis, as this is furnished by the theological science of the Church. For the Scriptures were written in foreign languages, the laws of which we must learn in order to understand the Scriptures, and in an age, the character and influence of which on the New Testament writers can only be made clear by historical investigation. Of course if we regard the New Testa-

ment writers as completely passive organs for the transmission of religious ideas and doctrines revealed to them, then the latter requirement falls away; but with it also the possibility of understanding the statements of the Scriptures on their own basis. For every written word can only be understood when we understand the condition under which and the purpose for which it was written. If the Sacred Scriptures were written without any regard for their surroundings and solely through a miraculous act of God, as is claimed by the old theory, then there is lacking each and every means for the objective understanding of what the words say, no matter how much the exact readings may have been settled by exact philology. It was thought in the times when this inspiration theory prevailed, that these means had been found in the dogmatics of the Church, and this was done by simply transferring into the Scriptures the ideas and the doctrines of the Church. But it is evident, that by such a process the normative use of the Scriptures is destroyed. If it is possible to understand the Scriptures only on the basis of a doctrine already formulated by dogmatics, then the contents of the latter can no longer be tested by the former, since its absolute agreement is the presupposition of dogmatical exegesis. Nor is this matter changed, when a modern philosophical theory is substituted for the old orthodox proposition. Rationalistic exegesis also could not and would not find in the Scriptures anything else than what agreed with its own notions; and in an equally arbitrary manner as did the old orthodox school, it forced its ideas upon the Scriptures. In those cases where rationalism was still unprejudiced enough to distinguish between what it regarded as the teachings of the Scriptures and what could not be regarded as Biblical thought, it made a distinction between the normative word of God in the Scriptures and the peculiar notions and teachings of the times in which the human authors had clothed their thoughts. But for this

very reason the normative power of the Scriptures was destroyed. Only the philologico-historical method can bring about that genuine interpretation of the Scriptures, which is demanded by the normative authority of the Scriptures.

However, the application of this scientific method in the interpretation of the Scriptures is not so simple a matter. If we proceed from the presupposition that a large portion of our New Testament books was written in the second century, then they must be explained on the basis of the ideas of that time. This method of explanation evidently moves in a deceptive circle. It explains the New Testament on the basis of the ideas of the second century, and proves out of the books explained in this manner that these belong to the second century; but against this method the other method is just as much right which believes that the doctrinal forms of the New Testament were first used and modified in the second century to represent thoughts entirely foreign to it. But even on the supposition that the New Testament books are the productions of the first century it is often maintained that their contents are to be explained on the basis of the later Judaism of the Jewish religious philosophy of Alexandria. Scriptures explained along these lines cannot of course any longer claim a normative character, because no scientific method would be able to determine what was original in these writings and what was taken from the notions of the times. But all of these interpretative methods overlook the fact that the agreement in these ideas in itself does not prove that in these writings a new religious consciousness and life has not found its expression. In itself it is still a matter of no doubt that if two persons say the same thing it is not the same. Whether this is the case here must be determined by the purely historico-philological method. It is clear from this that this method cannot be applied to the explanation of the New Testament except under certain presuppositions. These presuppositions are,

however, just as much without justification as are those of the dogmatical and the rationalistic interpretation of the Scriptures, if we proceed from the standpoint that the New Testament writer did not intend to say anything else than what other contemporaneous writings say. Just as certain as there is no scientific research without any presuppositions or "standpoint," so certain it is that only those presuppositions are justified in a science which proceeds from the nature of the objects to be scientifically investigated. Now, however, the New Testament without the shadow of a doubt claims to be the testimony of the revelation of redemption that has appeared in Christ. Whoever does not share this view cannot understand the Scriptures as they want to be understood. The conviction that their position is justified is purely religious in character, and as little originates in a purely scientific investigation of the Scriptures as any religious conviction is based upon or is refuted by scientific reasons. This conviction originates in the personal experience of redemption which is made through the correct use of the Scriptures, in this that the religious life that pulsates in the Scriptures, or the Holy Ghost who creates this life, works a similar religious life in us. Therefore he who reads the Scriptures for his edification has no need whatever of a methodical and scientific interpretation of the Scriptures; and of this use of the Scriptures it is true in the fullest sense of the word that the Scriptures interpret themselves. But the theological interpretation of the Scriptures requires this method to prove that the Scriptures are what they claim to be, or otherwise it could not do justice to their statements and could not understand them in accordance with their underlying presuppositions. A scientific interpretation of the Scriptures from this point of view is a necessity for the Church, if the latter would lead her membership into a true understanding of the Scriptures and their proper use, and if she would justify her faith over

against those of other faiths. Most of all, however, it is impossible without this method to employ the Scriptures as a canon, i. e., as norm for the critical examination of all new forms of doctrine and life.

4. **Biblical Theology.**—The sum of results of scientific exegesis of the Scriptures is called biblical theology. The chief object of the biblical theology of the Old Testament consists in a presentation of the different forms in which the religion of that stage found its expression at various periods. However important it may be for this purpose to show how the preparatory revelation of redemption was historically developed in progressive stages, so unimportant is this, for the religion of the New Testament, which almost throughout in its religious concepts and doctrines accepts as such this preparatory revelation. The biblical theology of the New Testament has an essentially different problem to deal with. This science deals with a complex of writings that originated within the comparatively short time of a few decades, but which were written by authors often differing to a marked degree. Their different individualities as also the course of their lives must necessarily have modified in them in different ways the impress which the revelation in Christ made upon them. In cases like Paul and John, from whom we possess writings dating from different periods in their lives it is even possible that the necessary development that came from the revelation of God in Christ may have in different ways affected the statements in their various writings. Still more significant is the fact that their writings are not merely confessions of their religious life, and that they all, as is shown by scientific exegesis, had the special purpose of meeting the particular wants of the different congregations. These circumstances were the occasion that induced the authors to write, for the purpose of educating the untrained Christians for whom they wrote and to justify the positions held by the authors over against the corruptions

of Christianity that at an early date to a greater or less extent were making themselves felt, to develop and unfold the fixed form of doctrines and then by exhortations to have these practically applied to the life that grows out of the true religion. The biblical theology of the New Testament can have only the one object of exhibiting in their individuality the religious and ethical ideas and doctrines that are found in the different books. Naturally in doing this we cannot go out from the presupposition that every biblical writer has fully developed his own doctrinal system, as it has often been charged against biblical theology. But notwithstanding this, this discipline will not be true to itself unless it makes prominent also the organic unity of each group of ideas with the central thought around which they circle and to demonstrate the historical development of the different types of doctrines. In those cases in which we have several books from the same author written at different times it must point out how far a development in ideas and doctrines can be traced in these writings. Here it can be readily seen how dangerous the principle, correct in itself, that the Scriptures interpret themselves, can become, if it is utilized without further thought as an exegetical canon. If a passage from John is interpreted by one from Paul, or a statement in the Gospels by one in the Epistles, because these are erroneously regarded as parallels, this process can lead only to misinterpretations. Whole books of the New Testament, such as the Petrine Epistles and Hebrews, have by these false methods been sealed as far as their real historical explanation is concerned.

Every dogmatical method of interpreting the Scriptures must, however, adopt this false method, in which case it is a matter of total indifference if it proceeds from the standpoint of orthodoxy or of that of modern advanced thought. From this point of view there is no such a thing as biblical theology, i. e., no recognition of the different types of

doctrines based on individual and historical peculiarities. True it is that only the old conceptions of revelation and inspiration in principle discard biblical theology, for if the Scriptures consist of a communication of religious doctrines transmitted through a supernatural revelation, then these doctrines are everywhere the same in the Scriptures. But as a matter of fact the adherents of the so-called "Biblical School" combat more or less directly the work of biblical theology by seeking to cover over the different types of doctrines that so plainly appear in the pages of the New Testament. These, too, are mistaken in this, that a theology which in all its essential features has been drawn from biblical sources can be applied to every detail as a canon of interpretation on the ground that Scriptures interpret themselves. The danger here is just as great as in the case of the old orthodox and rationalistic interpretation of the Scriptures, by which the interpreter's peculiar views are carried into the Scriptures, and that the unity and agreement of the Scriptures are saved by this method.

But from another side the attempt is made to show that this purely objective representation of the different types of doctrine found in the New Testament is of little value, as the purpose should be only to show the relation between the New Testament writings in the historico-religious development of the times. In doing this these writings are placed in the same category with the literary productions of later Judaism and of Alexandrianism, and are regarded like these as products of the religious movements of those times, although in the New Testament writings it is conceded that the religious impulses that proceeded from Jesus may have constituted an essential factor, but that these were inseparably connected with other influences. If that is the case then there is no reason to isolate them and to separate their theology from that of the times. True it is that in connection with this view the idea is advanced that the religion of

Jesus constitutes the highest development of religion, and that at all events through Him as a religious genius a new element has become active. But we know the religion of Jesus only through the pages of the New Testament, in which it is claimed that these foreign influences already are in evidence; and this religion itself, this new element is thought to have appeared only in old forms, out of which it is the work of scientific theology to glean the real kernel. The only thing that biblical theology can with a certainty discover, according to this view, still remains the agreement of its ideas and doctrines with those of contemporaneous theology. In so far as this agreement really existed and has not been carried into the New Testament theology by a false historical method, there is nothing strange at all in this phenomenon. For just as soon as the religion of the New Testament authors was called upon to find its expression in the form of doctrine for the instruction of others or for the defense of the writers, it was necessary that a connecting link be found between it and the consciousness of the hearers, and thus to express itself in forms of presentation common to the writers and the readers. If, however, biblical theology adheres to this shell, it never finds the real kernel of the matter, i. e., never attains to a knowledge of the new religious consciousness and life which the redemptive revelation in Jesus produces and expresses in the forms of its doctrines. But as these doctrines have without a doubt found their expression in a variety of forms in the religious development of the Apostolic age, both in accordance with the individuality of the New Testament writers and according to the conditions of the times, it is the province of New Testament theology in an objective manner to present these differences without consideration if or how much in these forms extra-Christian influences may have been potent factors.

5. **The Religion of the New Testament.**—The scientific investigation of the books of the New Testament can-

not rest content with these differences. It must press on to the unity that underlies these diversities. It is indeed claimed that if the existence of these diversities in the doctrinal types of the New Testament have once been acknowledged that it is arbitrary to presuppose such a unity, as such diversity might consist of contradictions and inconsistencies that preclude a unity. For that kind of theology which studies the Scriptures on the basis of its own presuppositions this possibility is out of the question. If the different types of doctrine are only the expression of the religious consciousness effected by the same revelation of redemption in different individuals at different stages of development, then these can mutually supplement and complement each other, but cannot contradict each other. A book in which would be found a religious consciousness absolutely contradicting that of another would be no record of revelation and of a necessity would be excluded from the canon.

It is something entirely different if in these forms of presentation and series of thoughts of which the New Testament writers make use to give expression to their forms of doctrines and to their defense and argument, such also are found as spring from the world of thought common to themselves and their readers, without their being connected with the religious consciousness that has been worked in them through the revelation in Christ. Only too often is the mistake made that an agreement between New Testament statements and pre-Christian and extra-Christian ideas is itself a proof that these had been incorporated into the New Testament as a foreign or even a contradictory element. It was not possible for the writers of the New Testament to give expression to the truths of redemption that had been furnished them by revelation for the purpose of communicating these to others in any other way than through current methods of thought, which they thereby convert into mediums and bearers of those divine truths. Where this did

not take place, where, as is often the case in later stages, remnants of the old have not yet been discarded or foreign elements are claimed to have been received without being properly assimilated, in these cases those forms of presentation by that very fact lose their importance for him who is seeking the underlying unity amid these diversities of doctrinal types. For this unity can consist only in the knowledge of the Divine Being, which has been given through the revelation in Christ, which, if appropriated as a living factor, works of itself a new relation to God and a method of conduct determined by His will, i. e., in the religion of the New Testament. This religion can be only *one*, because upon it is based the realization of the entire development of redemption, especially its consummation in Christ. Naturally this religion can be described only when the statements of the New Testament concerning the redemption given in Christ as also concerning the conditions and effects of its appropriation are given; hence it is found in a series of doctrinal statements which in their inner connection and in the solidarity of their connection in itself demonstrates the unity and the completeness of the truths of salvation it conveys.

Accordingly it will be the province of the First Part of this book to describe the presuppositions or conditions of this salvation. These are indeed not directly expressed everywhere in the New Testament, because the authors in many cases consider them as known from the preparatory stage of revelation. We must therefore in many cases go to the Old Testament as a source for them, to which the New Testament writers often enough appeal for this purpose. The Second Part will discuss the redemption in Christ proper. Here the subjects discussed will be the redemptive acts of God, in which this revelation has attained its consummation. But these are not simply historical facts, the mention of which would suffice; its purpose is rather to show the religious

significance of these acts, the understanding of which is necessary for the understanding of what true religion is. Here it will appear that religion is viewed by the different New Testament writers in many instances from different points of view; and their statements on the subject we must compare, if we would reach a complete understanding of the subject. The Third Part finally will treat of the Realization of Redemption in the individual and in the congregation, in the present and in the world to come. Here especially the divergencies of New Testament types of doctrine will become prominent. It will be necessary to show that these originated from the individual peculiarities of the New Testament writers and from the historical development of their religious life, which appropriated the redemption in Christ from different points of view and thus in a different manner showed forth this life. One of the natural results of this will be, that however different the expressions may be that are made concerning the salvation brought by Christ, these all go back to the same fundamental facts. Not all of the New Testament writers have had occasion to speak of the realization of salvation in the congregation; but we will be able to show that the statements made on this subject will suffice to reach an understanding of the question as to the divinely given laws according to which this consummation shall be realized. A vision of the future of redemption and the consummation of salvation then expected is certainly not wanting; but here, too, it will be influenced by the conception entertained of the completion of redemption already realized in this world. Notwithstanding this, we will see that everywhere the consummation of redemption promised by Christ is viewed in these different pictures only from different points of view. But it will not be possible for us to consider only the single types of doctrine, as these are given in objective form by biblical theology; but must go to their common root, in order to bring out the real religious

consciousness expressed in them. The inner unity and the necessary connection of the witnesses of this religious consciousness will furnish us a picture of the religion of the New Testament.

The relation between this picture of the religion of the New Testament and the theology of the New Testament can best be represented by the relation that exists between dogmatics and symbolics. If the dogmatics of any particular church purposes to summarize its distinctive doctrines as laid down in the symbols of that church in a harmonious and complete system of the religious truths therein confessed that it is the purpose in presenting the religion of the New Testament to give expression to the inner unity underlying the different types of doctrine of the New Testament writers. From this it by no means follows that such a presentation would usurp the place of the dogmatics of the church. For it is the duty of the church to penetrate more deeply into these truths of salvation, even beyond the forms of doctrine expressed in the New Testament. In the course of her development new needs arise which the New Testament writers could not take into consideration in their teachings. New hostile views appear which are to be overcome, new misunderstandings and errors which must be warded off. In their deepest foundations and consequences the church must understand these doctrines and must be able to defend them in the progressive advance of intellectual thought and life. This necessitates further construction of doctrines, which are not for this reason alone that they are such to be rejected, the conditions being the same in the development of the cultus and the life of the church, which the church gradually unfolds also beyond the precedent set by the New Testament. In these developments the Scriptures are the authority and a canon, i. e., are the norm according to which these developments are to be examined, to see if they have originated in the genius of the church or are to be rejected as foreign

elements. This latter is to be done, not because they are not yet found in the Scriptures, but because they are in conflict with the doctrines found in them or cannot show that they are based on scriptural teachings. In the degree to which this is discovered the baneful tendency will decrease, which has caused so serious a misinterpretation of the Scriptures, of finding in the Scriptures forms of doctrine and life that have been historically developed and perhaps are justified on the plea of thereby securing recognition for them as legitimate parts of Christian doctrine. On the other hand, the dogmatics of a certain church will always retain its individuality as historically developed, but correspond rather to a separate biblical type of doctrine and does not expand the whole wealth of biblical redemptive truth. Here it is that the science of the religion of the New Testament will be able to show the places where the one-sided features, that of a necessity accompanied the historical development of dogmatic, may endanger the correct presentation of the biblical truth, and where, on the other hand, it has been the occasion of newer constructions, which make better use than before of the whole wealth of the doctrinal forms contained in the Scriptures. This presentation is a necessity for the theological science of the church, in order that she may make full and complete use of the Scriptures as a norm for the development of her doctrines.

PART ONE

THE CONDITIONS OF REDEMPTION

PART I

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CHAPTER V

THE ESSENCE OF GOD

1. **The One True God.**—The Sacred Scriptures, the purposes of which is to furnish us the revelation of God, cannot begin with declaring or with proving the existence of God. On the other hand, every one who would come near to God and who would search the Scriptures from real religious needs, must believe that God exists (Heb. xi. 6). Only the fool saith in his heart there is no God (Ps. xiv. 1). But foolishness is not the inability to learn, but is the denial of this, that is, willful blindness. This presupposes that God can be known and that it is His purpose that He shall be known. True it is that He is invisible (Col. i. 15). The fact that no man has ever seen His essence (1 John iv. 12) is explained by 1 Tim. vi. 16-17 on the ground that He lives in a light which no man can approach. His essence by the very nature of the case is not knowable to man, whose knowledge in all cases proceeds from what he learns through his senses. It is significant that the Scriptures nowhere discusses the possibility of man attaining to a knowledge of God through his reasoning powers. This, however, is because the Scriptures nowhere call the ideas which mankind through his reason attains of God, even if these are of the most spiritual character, a knowledge of God. Reason has not been given to man for the purpose of furnishing him with ideas concerning God, but to understand the revelation of God. God is known only in his revelations, in the primi-

tive revelation (Rom. i. 21), in the revelation that has been given to Israel (John iv. 22); and, finally, in Christ (John i. 18, Matt. xi. 27). At the same time it is true that Paul declares that even this knowledge is only "in part," and that the complete seeing of God is reserved for the state of perfection (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12). Even John, who has found in this seeing of God in Christ the highest blessedness (Chap. I. 1), still looks to the future, when we shall see Him as He is (1 John iii. 2). But this shows anew that God can be known only in so far as He has made Himself known in His revelation acts. Just as He reveals Himself in Christ as the one who brings salvation through the sending of the Messiah, thus He reveals Himself in the end as that one who will complete this redemption, and only in this way will He be perfectly known.

The knowledge of God secured through revelation is and can be nothing else than experimental knowledge. It is therefore a mistaken idea to speak of a conception of God in the Scriptures. A knowledge of God received through the normal processes of the intellectual powers would be possible only for those who are skilled in logic and are able to form concepts. But in His revelation God reveals Himself to the babes, and indeed especially to these (Matt. xi. 25), because the pride of self-gained wisdom is often a hindrance to the reception of the full impression of the divine revelation. The result of a knowledge coming from revelation by the Scriptures is called "The name of God." Israel knows the name of God when God has manifested Himself as the one He is, by delivering the people out of the hands of their enemies (Jer. lii. 6), and because He has manifested Himself through His miraculous leading of Israel every pious Israelite knows His name (Ps. ix. 10). In this it is presupposed that His name is not an accidental or purely conventional designation, but that it expresses the nature of Him who bears it. Certainly not in a manner evident to our

reasoning powers, but as is the case with significant names that are favorite appellations in the Orient, and which characterize the leading peculiarity of the bearer (John i. 42). In this way the name of God includes everything that has been made known to us concerning the essence of God, as this name brings these things vividly to our minds. The purpose is not to furnish a theoretical knowledge of His being; but, since all revelation aims at a realization of religion, to determine our conduct over against Him. The name of God has been made known to us, that we may love this name, i. e., the God whose essence is designated by this name (Ps. v. 11), to praise and to glorify Him (Ps. lxii. 1; Rev. xv. 14), to call upon Him (Ps. cxvi. 4), as the one who alone can furnish help (Ps. cxxiv. 8), to deem Him holy and to fear Him (Matt. vi. 9, Rev. xi. 18). The name of God is to be proclaimed over all the earth, in order that all may learn to know Him as the one who has proved Himself through His wonderful deeds (Rom. ix. 17, on the basis of Ex. ix. 16). Jesus, too, summons together the whole result of His life's work in the statement that He has made known to His own the name of God (John xvii. 6-26). These now know to call Him as the one who has revealed Himself in Christ.

The word "God" (Elohim, *θεός*) is not a name for this purpose. The Scriptures use this name as a generic term for every creature superior to man in dignity and strength, for which reason it is often without the article the equivalent of "divine being" (cf. John i. 1). In this way Moses was to be the "god" of Aaron when he puts into the mouth of the latter what he is to speak (Ex. iv. 16), and of Pharaoh when he gives orders to him by divine authority (Ex. vii. 1). In this way Jesus Himself refers to a passage in the Psalms (Ps. lxxxii. 6), where human and that too unjust governments are called gods (John x. 35), and Paul calls the devil the god of this world (2 Cor. iv. 4). On the basis of such passages, in which the God of Israel is called the God of all

Gods and Lord of all Lords (Deut. x. 17, Ps. cxxvi. 2 sqq), Paul declares that there are really many gods and many lords (1 Cor. viii. 5). Only through His revelation does God receive a name that designates Him as the one who has made Himself known. It is therefore possible that there are many names of God, according to the different sides of His being which He has revealed. Thus He reveals Himself to Abraham as the Almighty (Gen. xvii. 1). To Moses He makes Himself known as Jehovah. For us it is not the chief matter to decide what this tetragrammation (J. H. V. H.) means; which even in the explanation given in Ex. iii. 14 admits of different interpretations, but says that by this name He intends to designate Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or as the God who has revealed Himself to the Patriarchs (Ex. iii. 15), and whom Israel is to honor as its only God (Deut. vi. 4-5). For this, too, is a characteristic of a proper name that it designates the bearer in his individual capacity, who is thereby distinguished from all others.

Since later Judaism on account of a misinterpretation of Lev. xxiv. 16 considered the name of Jehovah as too sacred to be uttered by the mouth of man, the Massorettes through the vocalization of the text indicated that the name is to be pronounced "Adonaj," or Lord. Hence it happens that the New Testament has only this one name (Greek *Κύριος*) for the god of revelation, the God of Israel. Mark xii. 29 quotes the passage in Deuteronomy: "The Lord our God is one Lord," i. e., unique in his essence, with whom none other can be compared. Jesus himself cites the passage from Deut. vi. 13 in this way: "The Lord thy God thou shalt worship and Him alone shalt thou serve" (Matt. iv. 10). This name was all the more characteristic because in this name was included the whole content of the higher stage of revelation. God can be recognized as the Almighty through the very works of creation (Rom. i. 20), but He can in this way only as the Highest Power in the presence of

which man is absolutely helpless. To Israel God has revealed Himself as the highest authority, to whom the people are pledged to absolute obedience. It is only to be regarded as an echo of the Old Testament when in the New, God is designated as the Almighty (Luke xxxii. 35, 76) or when special reasons in this connection calling for emphasis of His uniqueness (Rom. iv. 3, Eph. iv. 6, 1 Tim. ii. 6) explain it. In the records of the New Testament revelation of God it is self-evident matter that there is but one *true* God, i. e., only one who really exists, and that is He who has sent Christ to reveal Him; and the knowledge of whom is only then true knowledge when it includes also Him whom God has sent (John xvii. 3). As He is called the God of the fathers, because He had employed them as mediums of His revelation, thus in Eph. i. 17 He is called the God of Jesus Christ, because He has made use of the latter as the organ of His highest revelation. Through this revelation God receives a new name, in which His deepest essence is expressed. With this name Christ addressed Him (Matt. xi. 25) and taught His disciples to address him (Matt. xi. 9). Therefore Paul says (1 Cor. viii. 6): "But to us there is but one God, the *Father*."

2. **The Glory of God.**—The one true God is in contrast to the dead idols the living God (Acts xiv. 15; 1 Thess. i. 9). Every living thing possesses power, by expressing which it reveals itself. But the God of revelation makes Himself known through His deeds and through His works, in the blessings He bestows on the faithful and the punishments He inflicts on His enemies. The Messiah is called the Son of the living God, because this God has sent Him to carry out His plan of redemption (Matt. xvi. 16). The High Priest adjures Jesus by the living God, who will punish him if he lies (Matt. xvi. 26, 63), and it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. x. 31). What the Scriptures say of the way in which He gives expression

to His life can be clothed only in the forms that are taken out of the sphere of our own experiences. Only a spiritual being that is similar to our own being can become the object of our thoughts and can prove a power in determining our activity, something that an abstract conception cannot. The life that is in God and that He gives to His Son, in order that the latter should communicate it to us (John v. 26, vi. 57) is none other than that which for us consists in the knowledge of God in Christ (John xvii. 3), that is, His original self-knowledge. The way in which the Spirit of God searches the depths of the divinity is described by Paul entirely in accordance with the analogy of human self-consciousness (1 Cor. ii. 10-11). The Scriptures speak of the mind of the Lord as the seat of His counsels (Rom. xi. 34, according to Is. xl. 13); of His soul as seat of His pleasure (Matt. xii. 18, according to Is. xlii. 1); of His heart as the seat of His affections (Acts xiii. 22, according to 1 Sam. xiii. 14). The New Testament speaks exactly as does the Old Testament of the eyes and the ears of God as the organs of His knowledge, of His hands as the organs of His activity. All the so-called anthropomorphisms can be no proof that the idea of God found in the Old Testament is not yet spiritually concerned. When Jesus says that God is a spirit (John iv. 24) he does not propose thereby to proclaim a new conception of God, but He appeals for what He says to a truth that was equally well understood as self-evident by the Samaritans as well as by the Jews. But it is true that God's spiritual life is exalted above all limitations to which our life by experience is shown to be restricted. This supermundane exaltation of God the Scriptures expresses in the idea of his "Glory" (*δόξα*). This glory of God has manifested itself already in His revelation in nature, as Paul presupposes in Rom. i. 23, and as is so grandly described in Ps. xix. 1-7. This God of glory appeared to Abraham in the beginning of the history of redemption (Acts vii. 2); in the

deeds of salvation of the New Testament His glory is also manifested (Rom. vi. 4, ix. 23); and in the doxologies of God it is lauded (1 Pet. iv. 11).

Our life as we know it by experience is finite. It is only divine life that is infinite. God lives in all eternity (Rev. x. 6); He is the eternal and everlasting, who alone is immortal (Rom. i. 23, xvi. 26; 1 Tim. vi. 16). But Psalm xc. 2 declares that He was from everlasting to everlasting, as the one who was before the mountains were brought forth and the earth was formed; and in Revelations He is called the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end (Rev. i. 8). Human measurements of time do not apply to Him, for one day is to Him as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day (2 Pet. iii. 8, according to Ps. xc. 4). As the ruler of all the ages He not only rules all the generations of the world, but has also determined the order in which the development of the world takes place in distinct periods of time. That we are limited by time we not only know by the fact that our lives have a beginning and an end, but also the changes and vicissitudes that we observe taking place in time and in the progress in time. Even the heavens are subjected to this law of changeableness. God alone remains as He is (Heb. i. 11-12; Ps. cii. 27-28). This Being knows no change or turning, not even of the kind that the heavenly bodies show, which sometimes shine and sometimes do not (James i. 17). He is unchangeable.

But everything that has life has also an abiding place. God alone needs no dwelling place. He does not live in the temples made with hands (Acts vii. 48-49), because all the heavens cannot contain Him (1 Kings viii. 27). In order to give reason why the true worship of God is not confined to certain localities Jesus draws attention to the fact that God is a spirit (John iv. 21-24) and is therefore not limited to a certain place. But just as His exaltation above time does not exclude that He controls all times with their changes

and vicissitudes; thus, too, His exaltation above the limitations of space does not prevent His omnipresence. All of these statements are not based on the idea of an absolute spirit, whose freedom from the conditions of time and space excludes all relations to a world bound by time and space; it is based rather upon the recognized consciousness of the limitation of our human life, in order to awaken a vivid conception of the exaltation of God, who, for the very reason that He is not bound by these conditions, shows His presence in the same way and at all times everywhere in the world. These statements have as their purpose to awaken religious life, fear of Him before whom nobody can hide himself (Is. xxiii. 23-24), and from whose presence none can flee (Ps. cxxix. 7-10), confidence in Him who is near to all (Acts xvii. 27) and is by our side in every danger (Is. xliii. 2).

Everything that has life needs something for life. God alone needs nothing; He does not require man's help (Acts xvii. 25). Nobody has ever given Him anything first that it shall be recompensed unto Him (Rom. xi. 35, according to Job xli. 2); He is the Blessed One who has all sufficiency in Himself (1 Tim. i. 11, vi. 15). In order to satisfy its needs human life must depend upon the power that has been implanted in it, bodily and spiritual; but experience shows how limited these powers are. God's power alone has no limitations; He is the Almighty (2 Cor. vi. 18; Rev. i. 18). Again the point here is not that He is able to do everything absolutely, so that such foolish questions could arise as to God's ability to do what is self-contradictory or what is evil. His omnipotence consists in His being able to do what He wills (Ps. cxv. 3, cxv. 6). For He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast. (Ps. xxxiii. 9). This is made known to us, so that we may do as Jesus did, look up to Him who can do all things (Mark xiv. 36), to trust Him for whom all things are possible, even what is impossible for men (Matt. xix. 26).

But to carry out one's purposes there is need not only of power but also of the wisdom that always discovers the right means to attain its ends. Therefore the Scriptures call God the "Only Wise" (Rom. xvi. 27), who has no need of a counselor (Rom. xi. 34, according to Is. xl. 13). His wisdom is even past finding out (Rom. xi. 33), because His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Is. lv. 9). He has manifested His wisdom in the creation (Prov. iii. 19-20, xxvii. 13), as also in the preparatory stage of revelation (1 Cor. ii. 7), and then in its full development (Eph. iii. 10). But a wisdom that knows its goal must be able to know also absolutely all the conditions necessary to the attainment of this goal. Because our wisdom is limited we do not possess the right wisdom. God's wisdom, however, is absolute. He knows the whole world; He numbers the stars as also the hair on our heads (Ps. cxlvii. 4; Matt. x. 30); He knows all our wants (Matt. vi. 8); He looks into the secrets (Matt. i. 4, 6), and knows the heart (Luke xvi. 15; Acts xv. 8). It is only necessary to examine into the motives that the Sacred Scriptures assign for the omniscience of God to recognize the fact, that their purpose is to awaken fear of Him who will in His own time bring all things to light that are hidden in the hearts of men (1 Cor. iv. 5), and to arouse confidence in Him who knows all things that He needs to know to attain His purposes (Rom. viii. 27). God's omniscience is used for the purposes of His wisdom. What has been revealed to us concerning the former has not been deducted from the conception of the absolute, or with a view to the question whether He really knew everything knowable or not. Above all, the question whether He knows before hand what men by virtue of the freedom of their will would determine to do, which would relieve them of responsibility or would destroy the future in so far as it is conditioned by their activity, by which their liberty of action would be

destroyed, is from the very nature of the case an impossible problem for the religion of the New Testament.

3. **Holiness and Righteousness.**—As God's name is glorious (Ps. lxxii. 19) it is also holy (Luke i. 19, after Ps. exi. 9); His holiness corresponds to His glory (Is. vi. 3). He is the absolutely Holy One (Is. xl. 25; 1 John ii. 20), and is so worshipped (Heb. i. 12; John xvii. 11). His exaltation above the world brings with it also His holiness. But while the glory of God has already been revealed in the sphere of natural revelations God's holiness belongs exclusively to the sphere of the revelation of redemption. He is the Holy One in Israel (Ez. xxix. 7). For the limitations and restrictions above which God is exalted according to His glory are conditions of the world as God has been pleased to create it; in His holiness is found expressed His relation to the world, which, as is known through experience, is no longer what it should be, since sin has become dominant in the world. Over against this world God reveals himself as the Holy One, i. e., as the one who is absolutely separated from that which is not what it ought to be. The idea of holiness contains the idea of being separated. It is not lack of clearness in the representation of His holiness when in the Old Testament it is put in contrast to what is morally unclean, but also to what is physically unclean. There lies at the bottom of this idea the deep feeling that this world as such has through sin come into a state that is the opposite of what it ought to be and that even natural conditions and processes of life have been polluted by sin and have become unclean. Holiness is not sinlessness; for the mere declaration that God is without sin is folly, since God's very nature is the opposite of what is sin. But God's name is polluted by everything in the world that is sin (Jer. xxxiv. 16; Amos ii. 7); through sin it would appear that He is not in earnest in His separation from all sin or that He is not able to live up to His holiness, although His supermundane exaltation enables Him

both to show His holiness and to glorify Himself in the world (Lev. x. 3). In so far it is only a revelation of His holiness when He separates from among those nations that He had permitted to go their own way (Acts xiv. 16) one people to make it a holy nation (Lev. xi. 44-45). By making this people holy, according to His commandment, as He is holy (Lev. xi. 44-45) He makes Himself holy in it, i. e., He reveals His holiness to all the nations (Ez. xx. 41; xxxix. 27) the holy seasons and places that He orders for it have been separated from contact with the world elsewhere, that is not as it should be, and are dedicated to Him, as are the holy men whom He selects for His special service. Whenever that is done in Israel, too, which should not be done and His name is thereby defiled, then He makes Himself holy by punishing the sin (Lev. x. 3); and by the fact that the people purify themselves from their sins and repent (Ez. xxxvi. 23-27), then the Gentile nations by attacking His nations dishonor the name of God, and He can make it holy again in the eyes of all only when He punishes these nations (Lev. xxxix. 7, cf. xxxviii. 16). In this way Israel is the specific field where He reveals His holiness. Isaiah calls God the Holy One of Israel (Is. i. 4); He is the Holy One in their midst (Hos. xi. 9). To this people He has revealed His will through Moses and the Prophets, so that it keeps His law as well as every one of His commandments holy (Rom. vii. 12). In contrast to all that is as it should not be, the law reveals that which is good and right in the eyes of God (Deut. vi. 18) and God demands of the people (Micah vi. 8, cf. Rom. ii. 18). It is to this law to which Jesus refers when He says Matt. xix. 17): Why dost thou ask me concerning that which is good? There is but one who is good. If thou wouldst enter into eternal life, keep the commandments. Here in connection with the completion of the redemptive revelation we find the position correlate of the holiness of God. While the Old Testament revelation of holiness looked

to the exclusion of sin from Him and through Him, because it was what should not be, Jesus transfers the commandment of Lev. xi. 44 into the positive word, Ye shall be perfect (in love) as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matt. v. 48).

It is only a revelation of the holiness of God when He in His words separates Himself from the sinful world, in which sin and infidelity rule. God is not a man that He should lie nor the son of man that He should repent; hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good? (Num. xxiii. 19). The word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth (Ps. xxxiii. 4); and it is impossible that God should lie (Heb. vi. 18); and He has everywhere shown that He is the truth (Rom. iii. 4). But this can be the case only when He, who has in His commandments threatened with punishment all the transgressors of His will, in order to preserve His holiness, punishes all those who defame His name. This manifestation of His word of truth by the condemnation of all the transgressors is nothing else than a farther revelation of His holiness. Through His judgment upon the pride that rises up against Him the God of holiness sanctifies Himself, and that through righteousness (Is. v. 16). For the righteousness, on account of which He punishes the sins of the peoples (Neh. ix. 33; Dan. ix. 7), is the specific quality of God as a Judge (Ps. ix. 5; Jer. xi. 20; Acts. xvii. 31; 2 Tim. iv. 8). His judgments are just (Apoc. xvi. 5; xix. 2). In this respect, too, God is separated from the world, in which injustice and partiality rule. God does not regard the person of a man (Rom. ii. 1; Gal. ii. 6); His judgment is passed in accordance with the actual facts in the deeds of men (Rom. ii. 2). In His prayer at His final departure Jesus still appeals to the justice of the Father, so that in accordance with it He may treat His own differently from the world (John xvii. 25). For if His justice demands that He recompense each one in accordance with his works (Rom. ii. 5-6; 2 Thess. i. 6-7), then the pious

must be more prosperous than the wicked, as God must recompense these also according to their righteousness and purity (Ps. vii. 9; xviii. 21; xxiv. 5). But justice is not only the justice that punishes, but it must show itself over against both the good and the bad equally. It was owing only to the position of Israel, as the people were often surrounded by heathen nations and the pious were often oppressed by the godless, that God was called upon with greater frequency to prove His righteousness, by delivering them (Ps. xxxi. 2), and by bringing their enemies to shame (Ps. xxxv. 24 sqq.) when the pious so often appeal to His justice for help in their oppression (Ps. iv. 2). It still is His righteousness as judge that keeps the pious and punishes the wicked. But this idea is not changed by the fact that God has promised both and that He thus at the same time shows forth his faithfulness and truthfulness; for which reason His righteousness and truthfulness are appealed to in the parallelisms of Ps. cxliii. 1 and are glorified together in Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps. xcvi. 13 expressly says that He will come to judge the earth with righteousness and the people with His truth.

It is also impossible to apply the idea of righteousness to God in any other sense. In the case of men righteousness consists in this that they conform to the norm of the divine will (Deut. vi. 25); but in the case of God, who has Himself established this norm, it can consist only in this, that He regards this norm established by Himself as a guide for His own dealings with mankind. It is in all events only, as Paul says, speaking "after the manner of men," when he in Rom. iii. 3-5 on the basis of Ps. li. 6, speaks as if God were being tested as to the fidelity of His word and found justified; or, when, in Deut. xxxii. 4, the conclusion is drawn from God's faithfulness, that there is no iniquity in Him, and from His righteousness, that He himself is norm, in so far as in both cases He is separated from the falsehood and the iniquity of

the world, while without any reason an appeal is made to Ps. li. 16 for a seemingly different idea of God's righteousness than the judicial. When the repentant praises the righteousness of God that has saved them from their bloody guilt, they do this because God treats them differently from His treatment of the unrepentant; and because God expressly promises to do this, it is said in 1 John i. 9, that God is faithful and just to forgive the sins of those who repent. Righteousness continues to be the attribute of God which regulates the reaction of the holiness of God against sin and recompenses every one, both the good and the bad, according to his deeds. Even the revelation of the glory of God in His omnipresence and His omniscience is intended to awaken the fear of God in man. But it is only the revelation of His righteousness, which is controlled unalterably by the norm which God has established for the conduct of man, that can positively work a desire for that righteousness through which man can stand in the judgment before God.

4. **Grace and Faithfulness.**—God's revelation in nature makes known His goodness, and the Bible often interprets this revelation in order to awaken and intensify our appreciation of it. "Thank the Lord, for He is good and His mercy endureth forever," are the opening words of Ps. cxxxvi.; and by the constant repetition of this refrain, it directs us to the revelation of God's goodness in nature (vv. 5, 9, 25). The magnificent Psalm on nature (Ps. civ.), pictures in verses 10-28 the care of God for all His creatures, in affording them food and protection; and Ps. xlvii. 8-9; 14 ascribes this in so many words to the goodness of God. Jesus in Matt. v. 45 emphasizes the fact, that this goodness is shown without distinction to good and to bad. But nature, besides exhibiting such evidences of goodness also shows forth great terrors; by the side of the riches and the benevolence for the creature it points out also great sufferings and terrible oppressions. But in an altogether different way

God has revealed His goodness to Israel, as the Ps. cxxvi. already quoted in verses 10-14 shows at the hand of the history of the people and Ps. cvii. in the thousandfold experience of individuals. For the very reason that Israel is His holy people, the people of His possession, whom He has selected out of His own free love and has delivered it from the bondage of Egypt (Deut. vii. 6 sqq.), and whom He has guided by His goodness (Ex. xv. 13). It is the firstborn of the Lord (Ex. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1), all the members of this nation are His children (Is. i. 2; xliii. 6), i. e., are the objects of His special love and care. He has led, protected and blessed the people with a father's love (Deut. xxxii. 6; Is. lxiii. 16), and has shown for it an affection deeper than a mother's love (Is. xlix. 15; Jer. xxxi. 3). The love of a husband for his wife is also a picture of the love of God for His people (Hos. iii.; Ezek. xvi. 23). From this it can be seen how erroneous it is to place the revelation of the love of God in contrast to the revelation of His holiness and His righteousness in the Old Testament. It is, indeed, said, that in the Old Testament the love of God is limited to one single people; but this is conditioned by the historical character of the revelation of redemption. Since all the revelations of God are revelations of acts, this love can show itself over against the people only in this way that He makes them to be mediums of His revelations. It shows itself first of all in His mercy, according to which out of pity for the deplorable condition of the peoples, as this is so impressively pictured in Ex. iii. 7, 9, He has compassion upon them. He reveals himself to them as the merciful God (Deut. iv. 31). But since the greatest evils of the people were those caused by sin, He shows His mercy especially in forgiving the sins of the people who return in repentance and by not punishing them (Ps. lxxviii. 38), He reveals Himself to them as a God of mercy (Ps. cxvi. 5), and because the people frequently continued in their sins for a long time, He waits patiently

with His punishments, to see if they will finally repent (Jer. xv. 15). Since these three forms of the revelation of God's love are connected with the giving and the blessing mercy of God made with the Father He has promised this grace to their fession of Israel, which is the sum and substance of their redemptive history, and is often re-echoed in the Psalms (lxxxviii. 15; ciii. 8; cxlv. 8), a confession the like of which is scarcely to be found in the New Testament, viz. Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6).

The intimate connection between this fidelity and the demonstration of His grace is deeply embedded in the revelation of salvation in Israel. For in the covenant which God made with the Father He has promised this grace to their descendants, and has confirmed this repeatedly in the renewals of the covenant. However much Deut. vii. 7-8 emphasizes that God has selected His people from His own free love, mention is nevertheless made of the fact, that He thereby is keeping the oath which He has made to the fathers. So little is the revelation of His goodness contrary to the revelation of His holiness, that the certainty of His word, which is a revelation of His holiness, is only confirmed when He keeps what He has promised and remains true to what He has said. The patriarchs already glorified all the manifestations of the grace of God, which they had experienced, or evidences of his goodness and fidelity (Gen. xxiv. 27; xxxii. 11). Because His word is truth Israel hopes for the fulfillment of His promises (2 Sam. vii. 28), and does not hope for this in vain. "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Josh. xxi. 45), therefore the Psalms glorify together His goodness and His fidelity (Ps. lvii. 4; lxi. 8). His goodness does not cease to be goodness if it is exhibited as the faithful fulfillment of a promise made by God. But only those can experience the goodness of God who on their

part keep the covenant faithfully and realize the mission of the people to be a holy nation. The fulfillment of His promises is conditioned by the keeping of His commandments. And God remains faithful also when He showers His mercies abundantly over those who keep His commandments (Ex. xx. 6; Deut. v. 10). Only for those who keep His covenants are the wages of God nothing but goodness and truth (Ps. xxv. 10).

But as is His truth thus, too, His justice, which recompenses everyone according to his deserts, is a revelation of His holiness. According to His justice God must treat His people if they are faithful to His covenant differently from His treatment when they are unfaithful, by keeping His promises only in the former case. It has already been seen, that it is no misinterpretation of the idea of justice when justice and grace are extolled as parallels (Ps. xxxiii. 5; cxlv. 7), when the goodness of God, which continues from eternity to eternity over those who fear him, is joined with His justice toward those who keep His covenant and obey His commandments (Ps. cxiii. 17-18). Again in a parallelism to the statement that His goodness reaches as far as the heavens and His truth unto the clouds (Ps. xxxvi. 5-6) the statement is found that His justice stands like the mountains of God (cf. Ps. lxxxix. 15). Goodness does not cease to be goodness when he to whom it is shown has made it possible for God to do so according to His justice. In Ps. lxii. 12 we read: To thee belongeth mercy; for thou renderest to every man according to his work. His goodness as also His justice are appealed to, so that these through the punishment of the wicked will bring deliverance to the pious (Ps. xxxvi. 11 sq.). It is seen here again, how erroneous it is to regard the revelation of His grace as contrary to the revelation of His justice, as this latter only aims to secure for those who deserve it the goodness and the truth of God. Only we see here again, how much better the revelation of redemp-

tion is able to awaken religious life than the revelation of His glory can. The revelation also of His eternal and unchangeable omnipotence, His all-knowing and all-wise nearness, is intended to awaken our confidence in Him. But the revelation of His goodness, which is not bestowed arbitrarily and which could be withdrawn, but which if connected with His word of promise, must prove true, exalts the confidence in God into a conscious trust in His word, through the entire preparatory stage of the revelation of redemption runs, too, the promise of a final and highest revelation of His goodness toward His people. In Christ this promise has been fulfilled (2 Cor. i. 20). Therefore the faithfulness of God can manifest itself fully only in the New Testament. Here it has been revealed, that He is faithful who has given the promises (Heb. x. 23). Upon His faithfulness is then founded the certainty, that He will bring to a realization of salvation those whom He has called by strengthening and preserving them from all evil (1 Cor. i. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 3). In this way the revelation of His fidelity naturally leads over to His final and highest revelation.

5. The Revelation of the Love of God.—Christ fulfils the Old Testament promises. All of Israel's hopes are realized in Him. He is the Beloved Son in whom God is well pleased (Matt. iii. 17), and whom He has selected to be a Mediator of all of His redemptive work (John v. 20). The revelation of God which Christ alone can transmit (Matt. xi. 27) is the final and the highest revelation of the love of God to His people, through which God brings to them the promised completion of salvation in the Kingdom of God announced by Jesus. In Him His love is bestowed not only upon the people as such, which the mere membership in this nation of itself does not yet guarantee to everyone. In the Kingdom of God He manifests His Father's love to every individual who would be a member of this kingdom, by forgiving his sins, by realizing in Him His justice, by answering

His prayers, and by blessing and protecting him in his external life also. Among all the good and perfect gifts mentioned by James i. 17-18, the highest is this, that He has begotten through the word of truth the members of the congregation to become true adherents of God, as the children of Israel were always intended to be and yet actually often were not. Peter calls the believers out of Israel the "chosen generation," who notwithstanding their former apostasy received mercy, and to whom God now shows the evidences of His grace, of which they stand in need (1 Pet. ii. 9-10; v. 10). According to the Epistle to the Hebrews God has made a covenant with them, in which, on the basis of a full atonement for sin, the grace of God has again been bestowed upon them, and thereby the fulfillment of the promises of the old covenant has been secured. Especially is it the Apostle Paul who tells us that after the appearance of Jesus a new era has been inaugurated, the time of grace (*χάρις*) and of salvation (*ἐπιγάμνη*). But the gospel of this grace is preached not only to the people of Israel, but to all nations. God no longer waits for the return of the sinner in order to be merciful unto him. He has shown His love by giving His Son unto death for men while they were yet in their sins (Rom. v. 8), and accordingly proclaims the message of redemption to all the world (2 Cor. v. 19). In this act He reveals His innermost essence; now He is nothing but light, i. e. has been perfectly revealed (1 John i. 5). It is now no longer a single side of His essence that has been revealed, but His very essence. The revelation of God that is yet to be expected has nothing to add to this (cf. 1 John iii. 1-2). Everything is summed up in the word: God is love (1 John iv. 8, 16). The living God can give evidence of His life only in a certain activity, and the essential activity of His life is love. In His loving the real essence of His love is made known (1 John iv. 10). We so often understand by love the desire of love for that which pleases us; but this is at

bottom only one form of selfishness. God's love is of a kind that is directed toward the salvation of man; is a love that withholds no sacrifice. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John iii. 16). This love manifests itself also in a goodness that gives and bestows (Rom. xi. 22; Eph. ii. 7), in pity, by which He has compassion with the distress of man (Rom. ix. 23; 1 Pet. 1. 3); in his forgiving grace (Rom. iii. 24); in His long-suffering that does not desire a single one to be lost but that all should repent and live (2 Pet. iii. 9). All these manifestations of love are known to the Old Testament; what is new in the New Testament is the fact that they all spring from the love of God as His very essence.

The glory and the holiness of God already revealed in the Old Testament must then also serve the purposes of this love. Here it is again seen that the revelation of God's love is not to be placed over against the revelation of His holiness. The wrath of God that is aroused by sin is only the necessary reaction of His holiness, which must separate itself from everything that is not as it should be. Therefore His wrath is directed only against that which is really sin, while man's anger does not work the righteousness of God (James i. 20). Therefore, His holy wrath against sin goes hand in hand with His love for the sinner, the purpose of which being first of all to deliver man from his sins and make him again the object of the Father's love. The Jews were the children of wrath on account of their sins, i. e., had become objects of divine wrath (Eph. ii. 3), and yet on account of their election by God were loved for their Father's sake (Rom. xi. 28). It is entirely incorrect to look at the wrath of God from a purely eschatological point of view. It is true that the Prophets already point to the Day of Wrath in the Old as well as in the New Testament (Zeph. ii. 3; Rev. vi. 17). This is the great day of judgement on which the wrath of God will in a final way reveal itself (Rom. ii. 5; iii. 5).

The Baptist begins his work with the threat of the coming wrath of God (Matt. iii. 7); Christ has appeared to deliver from this day (1 Thess. i. 10; Rom. v. 9). But the wrath of God is aroused now already over all godless deeds (Ex. xxxii. 10; Jer. xvii. 4), and makes itself felt in the punishments that are inflicted on the sinners (Ps. vi. 2; xxi. 10); unless God turns His wrath into mercy (Ps. lxxviii. 38), and convert it into eternal grace (Is. liv. 8). This is not only the Old Testament way of speaking. In Rom. iv. 15, the Apostle tells us that all transgressions work the wrath of God; and in this world already His wrath extends over the children of disobedience (Eph. v. 6). In the history of the heathen peoples Paul sees a revelation of the wrath of God over all the ungodliness and injustice of men (Rom. i. 18). The wrath of God abides over all who do not render obedience to Jesus (John iii. 36), and this wrath accordingly rests upon them now already. There are vessels of wrath now already, which God has borne in long patience without thereby withdrawing the final proof of His wrath (Rom. ix. 22). The unbelieving Jews have felt the extreme wrath of God (1 Thess. ii. 16). The greater the revelation of the love of God in Christ, the more terrible must His wrath be enkindled over those who do not accept His grace and will not permit this grace to perform its work in them (Rev. xiv. 10; xvi. 19). But all of these manifestations of wrath in time have only the one purpose of bringing man to repentance (Rev. ix. 20-21; xvi. 9). Just as sure as His wrath on account of sin can be joined to His love for the sinner, just so little can there be a disharmony between His love and between His holiness and justice, which is to be harmonized from without. This is indeed, the highest revelation of His love that He does not seek the transcendent happiness of man, but his eternal salvation. Just as even human love, like weak good nature, does not take pleasure in the evil that the neighbor does, but because it seeks only

his good, rejoices only in what good he does (1 Cor. xiii. 6), thus God shows His wrath to man on account of sin, because He knows that sin is the destruction of man, only for the purpose of delivering him. For the very reason that He is holy the highest manifestation of His love must have as its purpose to make man holy as he Himself is holy, so that God can make it possible for man to participate in his own blessedness.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORLD AND MAN

1. **Creation as History.**—The revelation of God throws light also on the world around us and teaches us to recognize it as a creation of God (Rev. iii. 14). The proper conception of revelation from the very outset excludes the idea that the Mosaic account of creation is based on a supernatural communication of the process of creation made to the first man or to the Old Testament writers. This report shows merely what form the ideas current on this subject among all the peoples took from the standpoint of the religion that had been established in Israel. In this form the most significant feature is the fact that the world was called into existence through the word of the Lord. What is narrated in Genesis is only the plastic expression of what Ps. xxxiii. 6 declares: By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth. But the word is the revelation of the divine will, on account of which all things are, and are created (Rev. iv. 11). In Heb. xi. 3, it is particularly emphasized that this was to be so, so that the things which are seen were not made of things that do not appear. Not on account of the dualistic consequence do the Scriptures, to the scope of which such matters do not belong, deny the existence of material out of which the world was created; but, as we are distinctly told here, for the reason that the origin of the world can be understood only by faith, i. e., only from the standpoint of religion. It is a matter of essential importance for the Scriptures that the heavens and the earth were called out of non-

existence into existence by God (Is. xlviii. 13), who calls that which does not yet exist by name as though it were already finished in his eyes (Rom. iv. 17). From God alone all things can come (Rom. xi. 36).

The second thing that strikes us in the account of creation given in the Old Testament is, that there was a beginning of creation (Gen. i. 1); that the world did not proceed from God from eternity, in an endless succession of ever new world formations. As the Scriptures speak of a passing away of the heavens and the earth (Matt. v. 18), although only to make room for a new heaven and a new earth (Is. lxv. 17), thus they also speak of a beginning of creation (Heb. i. 10). They consider the creation of the world as a point of time from which they count and do not hesitate to speak of that which was before this beginning (John xvii. 24; Eph. i. 4), although seemingly the existence of God without time is put under the category of time. This is most intimately connected with the ideas entertained by the Scriptures of eternity and of the unchangeableness of God, which do not consist in this, that the changes and vicissitudes in time are not applicable to God, but that He rules and determines these. The Epistle to the Hebrews expresses a deep thought when it designates the created world not as a finished something, but speaks of the creation of the ages of the world, of the æons (Heb. i. 2; xi. 3), because their development, which God has appointed at the same time with the creation, necessarily takes place in epochs of time. The conviction has been deeply impressed on the true religion, which itself is based on a history that has become revelation, that real life began with creation, which life has the power and the laws of self-preservation and self-development in itself, and therefore from the very beginning must take the form of history.

It is for this reason that the very first book of the Bible relates a *history* of creation, which takes place in a series

of creative acts. In doing this the account presupposes that in no case the lower state of life has developed through itself a higher, but that to bring about this a new creative action was necessary on the part of God. In this way the world of the inorganic comes into existence first through the formation of the earth (Gen. i. 9-10). Then follows the creation of organic life in the vegetable kingdom and of animal life in the animal kingdom, both of which already contain in themselves the law of self-propagation (Gen. i. 11, 22). In the same way this account presupposes that already through the creative act, the different forms of life, in which each stage of life develops, are implanted (Gen. i. 12, 21, 25). It is, however, clear that at the bottom of the series of different creative acts is found the idea that in the earliest stages of existence the conditions must be established without which a development of the higher stage is not possible; that the former must first have attained to a full stage of development before a new one can be established. For this reason the creation of light is the first in order (Gen. i. 3; 2 Cor. iv. 6), as this conditions all life. It is naturally just as unnecessary as it is futile to try to bring into harmony with the results of natural science the different processes of creation, which even in the account found in Genesis and still more in later accounts are given in poetical forms. As certain as it is, that the mind imbued with the religious study of nature will have grasped essential features in this development correctly, so self-evident it is, that it will be only through the scientific investigation of nature that the different forms of life and these conditions of life will be correctly understood. It is clear that the distribution of the creative acts over six days is certainly done for the purpose of showing that the seventh day as the day of rest is something already appointed as a divine ordinance in creation (Gen. ii. 2-3). Jesus says expressly that by the fact of God's resting on the seventh day

a continued work of God in the world that was created by Him was in no wise denied (John v. 17); and the Epistle to the Hebrews considers this Creation Sabbath as a prophecy of the Sabbath rest which is in store for the people of God above, when the labors on earth shall have been done (Heb. iv. 9-10). The Old Testament itself at the close of its account of the history of creation emphasizes that everything that God made was very good (Gen. i. 31), i. e., was suitable for its purpose (1 Tim. iv. 9). This does not exclude each and every imperfection in details, for the harmony of the world at large, to which the New Testament term for world, i. e., *κόσμος* already points, is based on this, that higher and lower stages of life are united with each other and that each one points to a higher, until man, the highest, is reached. Further, the fact that each life stage appears in different species, shows that none of these represent in its fullness the essence of its stage of life, until on the highest stage man as a unique creature is found, in whom, therefore, the final purpose of creation must be sought.

2. **Creation as the Revelation of Love.**—If in the perfect revelation of Himself God is recognized as Love, then the beginning of His self revelation in the creation can be not only a revelation of His power (Rom. i. 20) but must also be regarded as a revelation of His love. By this fact everything that is already revealed in the Old Testament receives its deepest basis. The pictures of a world-material thought as existing at some place or other, or the creation of such, could not be a work of His love. Then, too, in an emanation of His own person, that would aim at His self-evolution, God could love only Himself. Creation must therefore consist in the production of something else that could become the object of His love. A world that from the beginning was a completed object could only be a play-ball of divine omnipotence. Only if the world from

the beginning contained in itself a relatively independent life can it make use of this life and in the development of this life experience the love of God, for all love is activity for the benefit of others. And now it is seen that it was His loving providence that caused the different creative acts to follow upon each other; that each stage of life finds realized already in the preceding that which it requires for the development of its own life. Now it becomes perfectly clear why the act of creation reaches its final and highest stage only in the creation of man (Gen. i. 26-27). There is such a thing as love for all things, but the perfection of love can exist only between spiritual beings. The whole work of creation has for its aim this highest creative act; each stage of life has its purpose in one higher; man alone has his purpose in himself; all creation exists for his sake, and yet the object of his existence is found beyond this world in a higher sphere, in which his destiny, his life, his happiness is to be fully realized. Therefore the individual as such in the lower sphere of its existence is transient; only the genus, rendered certain through the propagation of the race, has an abiding value; while man, if he is destined for a higher world, has as man an eternal worth.

With this we step upon the New Testament stage of revelation in the narrow sense. When the apostle emphasizes the fact that the secret of the divine plan of redemption, as long as there are ages or æons, was hidden in Him who has created all things (Eph. iii. 9), his object can be only to indicate thereby that in the act of the creation of the world the divine plan of redemption, which has been revealed in Christ, was already the decisive factor. It is expressly made prominent in 1 Cor. ii. 7, that the purpose of this determination of the wisdom of God made before the ages is our participation in His glory and blessedness. Because His love impelled Him to have other beings also

partake of this love He created man, and for his sake the whole world. But this love of God has been revealed to us only in Christ. As He was foreordained of God before the foundation of the world as the Mediator (1 Pet. i. 20), thus in Him also the recipients of salvation are chosen before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4). For their sakes the Kingdom has been prepared before the foundation of the world (Matt. xxv. 34). In Christ grace has already been given then before all times (2 Tim. i. 9). Therefore, it is stated in Col. i. 16, that the world was created in Christ; in Him in a causal sense the fact of the creation of the world rests. If He had not been, in whom God, as it were, has furnished the guaranty, that mankind is to be led to that goal for which they have been destined, then the world would not have been created, which could have only this one purpose to lead man, who represents the highest stage of creation, to this goal. That He who upon this earth is the Mediator of our salvation must also be the Mediator of our creation, is a view that is common and current in all New Testament writings (1 Cor. viii. 6; Heb. i. 2; John i. 3).

These foregoing opinions are not useless theological speculations that are taken out of this or that philosophical scheme. The passage in the Epistle to the Colossians shows how the riddle of creation, and with it the whole world-riddle, is solved from this point of view. The words "by Him" is particularly explained in this passage by the statement, that all things were created by Him and for Him, because, if creation originally rested in Him in a causal sense, it could not take place without Him, in whom from the first beginning God has revealed Himself in His essence as self-communicating love, and without reference to Him, in whom mankind was eventually to enter into the most intimate communion, it could not attain its end. In this relation of the creation of the world to the divine plan

of redemption is found the reason why in the former, too, the promise of the eventual consummation of the latter is contained. Therefore, even in the most direful times we can entrust our souls to our faithful Creator (1 Pet. iv. 19), who will finish what He has begun in the creation. Just as surely as the essence of God, which consists of love, excludes the idea that in the creation of the world He sought only His self-realization and the self-development of His being so certain it is nevertheless, that the creation of the world was not something arbitrary or accidental, that could equally as well have not been done. Since love has need of another in order to communicate itself to the latter, the creation of the world was something the necessity of which is based on the essence of God. But as this essence is revealed only through His works, the purpose of creation, as of all the acts of God, is to reveal His essence and to glorify Him. "Thou art worthy to receive glory and honor" are the words found in Rev. iv. 11, "for Thou hast created all things." In so far we can say that the whole world was created just as much for His sake (Heb. ii. 10) as it is for man's; that all things have their highest purpose in Him (Rom. xi. 36), finding in Him their blessedness. Indeed the assignment of this purpose thereby designates their real contents. God's glory cannot consist in the mere expression of His power. If the consummation of His plan of redemption tends to the praise of His glory (Eph. i. 12-14), then His highest glory from the standpoint of the New Testament consists in nothing else than the glory of His love; and the glorification of God, which was intended by the creation, can have been none other than this, that He was to be known in this act of love as He who He is. From the standpoint of this religious view of the world the solution is also found for every riddle that is based on the philosophical construction of an idea of God, such as how it is possible for the eternal and unchangeable God by the act of creation to

enter into time with all of its changes. By this fact He not only does not change His nature but He rather in reality realizes it, in so far as the deepest essence of all love is found in the transmission of self to another. Only in this way was it possible for God to bring the world to its goal, the limitations of which by time and its changes only could really transform, make it into something else, when man, in whom the highest stage of the world is reached, by the way of historical development, finally becomes partaker of eternity and of the unchangeableness of God.

3. **Man as a Natural Being.**—It is of basic import for the religious conception of the world, which regards man as the one great object of creation, to recognize the fact that the world is a fixed organism. Even the highest stage of life, which is marked by this, that God expressly makes known His counsel for its creation (Gen. i. 26), stands in the closest connection with the preceding stage, which consists of the land animals as the highest form of the animal kingdom, together with which man is created on the sixth day. He belongs primarily to the stage of animal life. As little as the creation of the animals (Gen. ii. 19) excludes the possibility that nature called into activity through the word of God should cause a new stage of existence (Gen. i. 24-25), so little does the formation of the body of man (Gen. ii. 7) exclude the possibility of his origin in an organic manner through the germs of life called into activity by the divine creative power. But we are told that he was made of the dust of the earth (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 47), and the idea of his artistic formation suggests the thought that the form of the body of the highest of God's creatures has also been prepared a beautiful object. The breath of life which God breathed into man (Gen. ii. 7; cf. Rev. xi. 11) is in itself none other than that which is found also in all animals (Gen. vii. 22). The earthly material, called into life by this breath of life, is called in the Scriptures

“flesh,” both in the case of man and of animals. The same differs in kind, but without a specific distinction (1 Cor. xv. 39). Animals and men are classified together as flesh, in whom there is the breath of life (Gen. vi. 17; vii. 15). But the breath of life, which enters into the flesh becomes a living soul, both in the case of men (Gen. ii. 7; cf. 1 Cor. xv. 45) and in the case of the animals (Gen. ix. 16; cf. Rev. xvi. 3); all living individuals men call “souls” (Acts ii. 41; vii. 14). The soul is the bearer of the physical life (Rom. xi. 3, according to 1 Kings xix. 10) as well as of the soul that feels and desires. The seat of the soul according to the Old Testament conception is the blood (Lev. xvii. 11); the flesh in which the blood is contained, is living flesh endowed with a soul. Flesh and blood (1 Cor. xv. 30; Heb. ii. 14) characterize man as an earthly living being. If the blood has been poured out, then the soul departs and a dead body remains, in which the flesh elements (James v. 3; Rev. xvii. 6) have lost their organic connection by virtue of which they had formed a carnal unit. Therefore, too, the flesh, if joined to the soul, can itself feel (2 Cor. vii. 5) and desire (Gal. v. 16), as a creature that feels and desires, i. e., as a creature with senses, man stands on the same level with all other animal beings and thereby in connection with the life of all nature. This connection by no means degrades him, it rather only confirms that all creation is an organic whole and makes it possible that in man, in whom the highest stage of creation has been reached, the purposes of creation shall be attained.

In this particular, too, man is akin to the animals, that he, like they (Gen. i. 22), received the blessing of reproduction of his kind (Gen. i. 28). Man, too, has from the beginning been created in two sexes (Gen. i. 27). The idea that Adam was created first and afterwards Eve (1 Tim. ii. 13), and that, too, out of Adam (1 Cor. xi. 8, 12), already finds a plastic expression in Gen. i. 2, 21 sqq., but with the express

object only of explaining the fact that an irresistible impulse of nature draws the man to the woman for the purpose in turn of uniting her in sexual union with him and thus to annul the sexual difference (Gen. ii. 24). By these two becoming one flesh (Mark x. 8) begetting according to the flesh results (Gal. iv. 23-29) whereby reproduction is brought about. What the flesh begets is again a creature of the flesh (John iii. 6). Adam begets a son after his own image (Gen. v. 3). With this it has been given that in the begetting of a new living creature a soul comes into existence together with the living flesh; for living flesh without a soul is an impossibility. The idea that in connection with the act of begetting a soul newly created by God or even a pre-existing soul is united with the newly begotten flesh, is entirely contrary to the Scriptures. It is useless to appeal for this idea to such passages where it is said of a single human being that God made him or that the breath of God gave him life (Ps. cxix. 73; Job. xxxiii. 4); for this is only a religious expression for the fact that man is indebted to the creative act of God for his existence, in which connection the question whether this in each case takes place mediately or immediately is left undecided altogether. When in Heb. xii. 9, God is called the Father of the Spirits in contrast to the Father of our flesh, this can not at all be meant in the creative sense, since the proceeding of a descendant from the loins of a father (Heb. vii. 5, 10) is the strongest expression for Traducianism. The idea of a constant renewal of creative acts, which are thought to be necessary in the origin of each human being, contradicts the fundamental thought of the Scriptures of a creation finished once for all (Gen. ii. 2). It tears apart the organic unity of the human race, upon which Acts xvii. 26 lays so much stress, and the clear teachings of the Scriptures that salvation is intended not for the individual human being but for all mankind as such.

On the other hand the question if the human race is derived from a single pair or from a number has no connection with the preceding. This is purely a question for natural science, which can be solved by science only with a greater or smaller degree of probability. Only the idea that the Biblical account of primitive history is supernatural instruction on the subject of the order of creation can make the unity of the human race a binding dogma of faith. The creative and primitive history of man as this is depicted from the standpoint of the religion of Israel, could naturally be exemplified only in the case of a single human pair. The idea of the simultaneous creation of a number of pairs is from a religious point of view so little an impossibility, that it makes unnecessary for the propagation of the human race the marriage of brother and sister, so strongly condemned by the Scriptures. That throughout the New Testament this typical primitive history is everywhere regarded as real history is based on the fact that it was so understood by the New Testament times. The unity of the human race is based on the fact that God created mankind of two sexes and through the sexual desires and the corresponding organization of the woman secured the propagation of the human race.

4. **The Image of God in Man.**—That which raises man above the animal is often sought for in a third element claimed to be his in addition to body and soul, namely the spirit, so that man is considered trichotomic. This idea is in every particular contrary to the Scriptures. The Spirit which God causes to dwell in man (James iv. 5) is really nothing else than the principle of physical life without which the body is dead (James ii. 26), for which reason this spirit also departs when death is present (Matt. xxvii. 50). The spirit is so little different from the soul which man possesses in common with the animal creation, that it is only by the entrance of this divine breath of life into the material that,

as we have seen, animals and men become living souls. Everywhere throughout the Scriptures the same manifestations of life are ascribed sometimes to the soul and then again to the spirit. Both expressions appear as perfectly synonymous; for the soul is merely the divine breath of life that has entered into the earthly matter and the spirit is the living principle of the soul. The heart, however, is not a psychological conception in the Scriptures. The heart as the centre of the circulation of the blood, since according to the idea of the Old Testament the life has its seat in the blood, is the seat of all spiritual-mental life. It is especially called this in those passages in which the secrecy of the inner man (2 Cor. iv. 16) is to be emphasized in contrast to the all that is externally visible (1 Pet. iii. 4; 1 Cor. iv. 5). It is in vain to appeal for the doctrine of the trichotomy of man to Heb. iv. 12, where the sole purpose is to picture the power of the word of God as it forces its way into the innermost recesses of man in this manner that, the soul and its deepest life foundation, namely the Spirit, are, as it were, dissected. A departure from the common usage of the Scriptures is found only in the case of the Apostle Paul, who, in so far as he does not adhere to the popular use of the words body and soul, reserves the word "Spirit" (*πνεῦμα*) as an expression for the Spirit of God that has been bestowed upon the believer, in which sense also 1 Thess. v. 23 alone speaks of a spirit besides the soul and the body.

The Scriptures know nothing of the bestowal upon man of a new element of life that distinguishes man from the animals, but they do ascribe to both the spirit and the soul of man functions which are unknown in animal life; the functions of feeling, thinking, and willing. How man has attained these the Scriptures nowhere directly say. It is only noteworthy that they state, that in the creation of man the breath of life was breathed into him by an especial act of God (Gen. ii. 7), but that its presence is simply pre-

supposed in the case of the animals. This can be nothing but the plastic figurative expression for the idea that on the basis of a new creative act on the part of God the animal life that belonged to man was given the power to develop into a higher life, the spiritual life in the narrow sense of the term. Spiritual life cannot in the nature of the case be communicated to others, but can originate only there where the conditions for it exist. Even the life of feeling and the desires cannot be communicated, but it originates on the basis of a material organization of man endowed by the divine breath of life for this purpose. In the same way it is only possible as the result of a higher power coming from a divine breath of life that feeling, thinking and willing are developed in man. At the creation of the world this process was not only introduced by the one act of creation, but in conjunction with this there has been implanted in every soul the law of life according to which in every newly created man the soul-life is unfolded into the spiritual (in the narrow sense). This dichotomic view of the Scriptures is a matter of the greatest importance. It alone guards the unity of the nature of man, which by the separation of the soul and the spirit into different life centres is irredeemably lost, as also man's organic connection with the life of nature, upon which his relation to the entire creation depends. The trichotomic hypothesis necessarily leads to the acceptance of a special creative act in connection with every new life and to a false spiritualism, according to which the body is the prison of the soul.

The spiritual life that develops on the basis of the animal life is the image of God, after whom man has been created (Gen. i. 26-27). This cannot mean a religico-moral characteristic; for since after the loss of the original it is still said that God created man after His image and His similitude (Gen. ix. 6; James iii. 9). Paul sees in man the

image of God (1 Cor. xi. 7) just as this is the case in the story of creation. The churchly use of the term Image of God is based on Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24, where, however, the writer does not speak of the first creation at all but of the new creation in the believers. Again the image of God cannot consist in his supremacy of the earth, since this, according to Gen. i. 26, is only one of the consequences of the fact that man has been created in the image of God. The spiritual life, in the narrow sense, is that which in man is specifically like God. In this sense Paul finds that the word of the heathen poet is justified (Acts xvii. 28): Ye are of divine origin. Just for this reason the Scriptures as in all of their statements concerning God from the analogy of man's life, could speak of His affection, His thoughts, His counsels; not because they make God to be a man, but because man has been created after the image of God, and it is accordingly possible to recognize God in him and his being. Just as a picture is the representation of an object in a different material, thus, too, man is the expression of divine life in the limitations of the carnal nature. In the Old Testament, too, the flesh is often mentioned in contrast to God, His word and His spirit (Ps. lvi. 5; Is. xl. 6-8; xxxi. 3). It is not a contrast that has become such through sin, but one that is founded in creation. This is the basis of the peculiar use made of the word "flesh" (σάρξ) by the Apostle Paul, according to which this is not only the material substratum of our earthly life but the entire natural life of mankind in contrast to the divine. On the basis of the divine act of creation a life is developed within the limitations of our life in the flesh that goes out beyond this. His self-consciousness and self-determination are not confined by these limitations and for that reason have a virtue and worth that goes beyond the transitivity of all flesh. For this reason God has found only in this stage of His creation an object worthy of His love.

For love demands for the I a Thou, and can exist only between beings endowed with personality.

5. **The Original State of Man.**— Since the idea of a primitive golden age is found in the traditions of all nations it is perhaps not impossible that in Israel, too, the account of its conception of Paradise and of the first human beings may have received much of its formation and coloring from this source; but the thing itself is indissolubly connected with the true religion itself. If all things that God created were very good (Gen. i. 31), then man, too, as he came from the hands of God must have been very good. This does of course not mean that he from the outset possessed all of the perfections of the religico-ethical life; for it belongs to the nature of spiritual life that it is developed by gradual stages. It lies in the nature of all spiritual things, that they possess a value only when they are acquired by conscious self-determination. If, however, the creation is the first and most natural revelation of God, and if man has in creation been endowed with the ability to know God and to serve Him according to His will, then naturally religious life must have developed itself in man in his normal condition. Reason and freedom are no empty powers. Reason develops the power to know God only as He reveals Himself in His creation; freedom and self-conscious self-determination develops in man who has been created good only as a voluntary entering upon the revealed will that shows itself in love. If it is the highest destiny of man to attain to a perfect communion with God then a beginning of this must have been realized even in the primitive condition of mankind. The Apocalypse in its picture of the life in the consummation of the Kingdom of God draws its colors from the Old Testament description of the life in Paradise. God walks among men (Gen. iii. 8) and they hear His voice (Gen. ii. 6). In the primitive stage of the history of mankind religion is realized in so far as this could be done in

the child state of man in that era, in a Godpleasing state of blessedness.

The normal relation that existed between God and man corresponds to man's normal relation to the world created by God. Man was created to be lord of creation (Gen. i. 26-27; cf. Ps. vii. 7 sqq.), and as in the nature of the case he could only in the course of time become such; this purpose, too, of his development must have been implanted originally and realized so far as it was possible in his state of progressive development. Nature around him still offered him everything that he needed and proved serviceable to him in all respects. God brings to him the animals and awakens in him the ability to give them names (Gen. ii. 19) so that he may determine the value of each for his purpose. In what way this normal relation between man and nature was at that time realized is a matter that on account of the perfectly changed conditions, we can no longer know, since we can know only what falls under our experience. But so much is emphasized by the story of Paradise that this condition of the world was not yet universal. God planted a garden in Eden (Gen. i. 7, 8). But this condition could be preserved only through the work destined for man, that he should dress and keep the garden (Gen. ii. 15). Man is just as much intended for culture as for the cultus. He is to learn to serve God and to rule over the earth, and in this very thing he is serving God. The thought suggests itself to supplement the account of the Scriptures with the idea that under his hands the whole earth is to be converted into a garden of God; i. e., is to be converted into the domain adapted for his highest realization and perfect service to Him. As in the prophetic prediction, together with the realization of religion the richest blessings are poured out also over all nature around and about in the same way. On the basis of its normal development, this condition was to be brought about through his activity, because the world,

created for his benefit, was adapted for this very end. The life of man in Paradise shows that the beginnings of this destiny of man has already been realized; the primitive condition of man was as little one without culture as it was without cultus.

Naturally man in his own essence partakes of the essence of the nature that surrounds him. He himself is a creature of nature. But because he has been created after the image of God, because all other stages of the life of creation are possible only for this reason, because these stages of life have their purpose not in themselves but in him, therefore he cannot like all other creatures of nature be a mortal being. He in whom the purposes of all creation are realized must be immortal. Man is destined for communion with God. But the eternal God cannot enter into communion with a being that is mortal. For this reason Jesus concludes from the mere fact that God calls Himself the God of the Patriarchs that these were destined for an eternal life (Mark xii. 26-27). In the religion of the New Testament, according to which creation is a work of divine love, the purposes of which are realized in man as the crown of creation, the endless existence of man is a self-evident proposition. In general the Scriptures nowhere in so many words teach the existence of the soul after death. All peoples in all religions have hoped for it and only philosophical confusion has denied it. But it was reserved for the true religion as established in the Scriptures to furnish the absolute certainty of immortality. If the soul is the breath from God, which by His creative word has founded in the carnal nature of man a life that is a godlike life, that is above nature, then this soul must be as immortal as God is Himself. But the endless existence of the human soul is not immortality. This latter is an attribute of God alone (1 Tim. vi. 16). Man is distinguished from God by this very fact that he has a natural side which is subject to death.

According to his carnal nature he is dust that will return to dust (Gen. iii. 19). But in Paradise grows the tree of life (Gen. ii. 9); and when in consequence of his sin man was forbidden to eat of its fruit and to live forever (Gen. iii. 22, 24), this presupposes as self-evident that this had been his destiny originally. As he through the complete mastery over the world was to convert the whole earth into a garden of God, thus, too, through the normal development of his spiritual life he was to master the nature side of his life, to transform it into a perfect organ of his religious and ethical life, and thereby exalt it unto everlasting glory. Man was not created immortal, but he was destined for the immortality, which in the normal course of his development he could and would have attained.

CHAPTER VII

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

1. **The Occasion of the First Sin.**— The fact that the original destiny of man in his primitive condition was not realized but rather that his condition, as evidenced by experience facts, became an entirely different one, is explained in the Scriptures by the narration of his fall into sin and its consequences. It is entirely a matter of indifference to what extent in the development of this picture details from the old traditions of the nations have been introduced. The nature of revelation precludes the idea that this narrative was transmitted in a supernatural way, nor could it have been handed down by tradition from the first human beings. The religion of the Old Testament, which worships a holy God, can explain this direful change only as a punishment for the sins of man; and its prophetic narrator reports a typical story of the origin of sin; not for the purpose of reporting dead facts, but vividly to teach the essence of sin and to warn against it. This narrative begins with the statement that God through a positive command gave to man the choice to follow His will or to disregard it (Gen. ii. 17). According to Rom. vii. 7 sqq., also the history of sin begins with the fact that the commandment is given to man: "Thou shalt not covet." The book of Genesis considers this, too, as something good, i. e., as something wholesome for man; for the tree of temptation belonged also to those trees that God had caused to grow in the garden for the good of man (Gen. ii. 9). In fact the condition of innocence in primitive man, in which man does the will of God

because he immediately recognizes it as that which must be done, notwithstanding the God-pleasing condition of blessedness that is connected with this, is not yet the goal which man was to attain. A truly voluntary fulfilment of God's will, one that proceeds from the love of God, must be conditioned by the consciousness of the ability to do otherwise. This consciousness, however, can arise only when the opportunity is offered to man to do that which God has forbidden. Not through the actual prohibition but already by the very fact that He planted the tree with the forbidden fruit in the garden, God gave to man this opportunity of being tested.

Without this test man cannot go from the condition of innocence into the state in which he through trial becomes pleasing to God. Even the Son of God could not learn obedience without this temptation (Heb. ii. 18; iv. 15) and become perfect (Heb. v. 8-9). Therefore, too, the children of God should consider such trials as a great good (1 Pet. i. 6), because without these they cannot prove themselves. And if in the consciousness of their weakness they constantly pray that God would not lead them into temptation (Matt. vi. 3), and on their part avoid everything that would lead to a temptation (Mark xiv. 38), yet the experiences of life that bring temptation with them are not an evil but a good, not the consequences of sin, but have been so ordered by God. The New Testament has only one single word (cf. James i. 2, 12) for the temptation that gives us the opportunity to decide for God while at the same time we are conscious that we could determine otherwise, and for the temptation that lures us on to sin, because in reality both are the same, and only the results show whether it was the one or the other. This is the history of every sin. Paul says, in Rom. vii. 7: I had not known lust except the Law had said: Thou shalt not covet. The natural impulse is nothing sinful. Only when the law of God confines the natural

impulses within those limitations that must be set for them, in order that the use of the good things of the world that have been created for us may not conduce to our destruction, man becomes conscious of the fact, that he could do otherwise, of the consciousness of the possibility of a self-determination that may set itself up against the recognized will of God. Paul had an experience that he regarded as typical of the experience of all, namely, that this consciousness leads to sin. Only when the prohibition came did sin become actual in him; the latter took advantage of the opportunity in order to influence the will through the Law to seek that which was forbidden (Rom. vii. 7-8).

With this enough has been said to characterize sin. All the terms used in the Old Testament for sin point to a missing of the right road, i. e., in accordance with the picture common in the Scriptures of a departure from the correct divinely appointed way of action, of a provision in contrast to straightness, of an abnormal action in contrast to the action after the norm of the divine will, even of a rebellion against God, an apostasy from Him. The New Testament Term for sin (*ἁμαρτία*), also points to a missing of the right mark, whenever it is not directly used to designate a trespass or a fall, or the transgression of the law. Sin (1 John iii. 4) is ignoring the law, it is in principle, a declaration of independence of the will from a divinely given law, and is therefore enmity to God (Rom. viii. 7; James iv. 4). Sin is accordingly conscious self-determination against the recognized will of God. The idea that sin is something that is necessary by nature is something that could not have been prevented, is nowhere in the Scriptures expressly declared impossible, because this in the nature of the case is impossible in view of the revelation of God as of the Holy One. The idea of a conscious self-determination, to which also sin belongs, is as such never formulated in the Scriptures, because this belongs to

the essence of man, who is created after the image of God, and is therefore a free agent.

2. **The Origin of Sin.**— But the narrative in Genesis also solves the riddle how man, living in blessed innocence, came to sin. It was not an irresistible temptation that come from the forbidden fruit that caused the sin of our first parents, because then God would be the author of sin, since He had made the tree together with its fruits. Just as little was it the impulse of the senses in so far as this was more powerful than this impulse to fulfil the divine command; for the former is established in the nature of man as created by God and therefore in itself is without sin. How it took place that man transgressed the limits that God had set for his desires is the riddle that calls for a solution. The narrative in Genesis expressly shows that the power of deception was not found in the tree with its fruits, and transfers this to the serpent that is regarded as the symbol of deception (Gen. iii. 1, 4-5). Jewish theology already saw in this serpent the Devil (Rev. xii. 3-9) in order to explain the super-human power which the temptation displays. But this agency, too, must have had some connecting link in man, and this is designated by the old narrative already as deception (Gen. iii. 13; 2 Cor. x. 3), effected through a misrepresentation of the consequences of eating this fruit. The deception does not indeed lie in what the serpent says of the consequences in themselves (Gen. iii. 5, cf. v. 22); for man's being like God, that is here promised, consists in this, that God has the law of His actions solely in Himself, while man can attain his goal only in the voluntary subordination to the divine will. In this, too, the serpent is perfectly right that man gains the practical experience of this ability to make use of his own will over against the divine only by a transgression of the commandment. But the deception consisted in this, that the consequences of this act were represented to him as something good. Man believed by making

his own self the law of his actions, by following his own individual will in contradiction to the will of God, that he would gain a higher stage in his type of life, and a richer progress in life than had been his during his former subordination under the divine will, and this misled him to desire the forbidden fruit and to transgress the commandment.

This, too, is typical for the origin of sin. Certainly the first impression is always this, that sin originates in the love for the world, i. e., for the multitude of earthly possessions (James iv. 4), the attraction of which induces men to enjoy these also against the commandment of God, so that the influence that taints him with the corruption of sin emanates from the world (James i. 27). But this attractiveness is something entirely in conformity with nature and hence produced by God, because it is He who incites man to the attainment of his destiny, that of ruling over the earth; only this, however, that God for the blessing of man must rule and regulate man's enjoyment by His commandment. This James knows full well, as he emphasizes the fact that God tempts no one to evil (James i. 13). This attraction that proceeds from nature and arouses the lust of the senses is not the *cause* of sin, but it is the *occasion* which sin seizes upon in order to deceive men as to the consequences of yielding. For the very reason that the image of God in man has found its expression in his carnal nature, it is possible that only the sense impulse aroused in this can give him the occasion of becoming conscious of his being like God, i. e., of making use of his own will against the will of God that regulates all enjoyment of his desires. While the impulses that grow out of his Godlike nature determine him only in agreement with the divine will, he now, in following his sense wishes, becomes conscious of a will of his own that can find satisfaction also when it goes against the divine will. James i. 13 also explains the temptation to sin on the basis of desire inherent in man as such, that is, a

being of flesh; and Paul expressly characterizes sin as selfishness, as living for self (Rom. xiv. 7; 2 Cor. v. 15). The last and extreme form in which sin appears is found in the arrogance that makes itself equal to God (2 Thess. ii. 4). It can therefore only be a misunderstanding when it is maintained that Paul in a dualistic sense considers the flesh with its impulses as in itself sinful; or the supremacy which the former sensuous impulse in its more powerful development has gained over the spiritual life in man as the cause of sin. In both cases sin is made the product of God, who has created man as a carnal being and has ordained the laws of the development of his life. If the flesh in itself were sinful then the body could not, before the transformation of its substance, belong to him as the temple of God (1 Cor. vi. 13, 15, 19); could not be made a God-pleasing sacrifice (Rom. xii. 1), and with all of its members serve the Lord (Rom. vi. 13-19). Then the sanctification of the body could consist only in killing the sensuous impulses, to which Paul does not agree, who expressly antagonizes this kind of asceticism in the Epistle to the Colossians (cf. also 2 Tim. iv. 1 sqq.). The fact is for Paul not merely the material substance of the body is the seat of sensuous desires, since he counts purely spiritual sins also (Gal. v. 19-21) among the deeds of the body. The false concern and care for the body lead not only to licentiousness and lust, but also to strife and jealousy (Rom. xiii. 13-14). He calls the Corinthians "carnal," on account of their contentions (1 Cor. iii. 3), and he speaks of a carnal wisdom (2 Cor. i. 12, 17). For him the flesh is man as a creature of nature in general, but as he has been developed on the basis of his material nature, he does not designate it as sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3), because it is sinful in itself, but because it, like the body of man as a matter of fact (Rom. vi. 6) is controlled by sin. Sin as a power is expressly declared to be something different from the flesh, in which it merely has

its abiding place (Rom. vii. 18, 20). The ideas that underlie this account are exactly the same as those at the basis of the story of the fall. While the spiritual life of man in its likeness to God is always directly subordinated to the divine law (Rom. vii. 23, 25), man in his carnal nature becomes conscious of his individual life, that furnishes him the opportunity to carry out his will over against the will of God, and thus becomes subject to sin (Rom. vii. 14, 25). Only through sin is the natural difference between the carnal human creature and the divine spiritual being converted into a hostility. Paul also declares that all sin came from deception (Rom. vii. 11), which hopes for a higher phase of life as a result of insisting upon one's own will instead of trusting God, who so far had given man all that he needed, to find this in submission to His will.

3. **The Punishment of Sin.**—Man's deception through sin consists in this, that instead of the hoped for advancement he now finds a hindrance in life. This is clearly expressed in this that the Scriptures, which otherwise do not have a special term for guilt, because this is contained as a matter of course in its idea of sin, now at times compares this guilt with a money debt (Matt. vi. 12). Like that person who is obligated to pay something, by the fact that he does not pay, only loads upon himself a debt that constantly oppresses him; thus, too, the duty of man to obey the divine will does not cease to be a duty because men has declined to do it. It rather continues as a burden upon man's shoulders, and becomes all the more oppressive and a hindrance in his life, because it cannot be fulfilled. For a man can never do more than his duty (Luke xvii. 11). So that he cannot by any later works of his make amends for the non-fulfilment of duty in former times, he accordingly is guilty over against the commandment when he failed to fulfil (James ii. 10), or over against him against whom he has transgressed (1 Cor. xi. 27). This indebtedness is always forced upon the

attention of man by his conscience, i. e., by the consciousness of his sin. Just as conscience, which unconsciously passes judgment on the moral quality of man's actions, presupposes a gauge for the measurement of these and in so far bears testimony to the original existence of a moral consciousness in man (Rom. ii. 15), thus it is in reality nothing else than the reaction of this consciousness of duty against the actual non-fulfilment of duty, as this had been arranged in the original creation of man by God as necessary. Instead of the expected exaltation of the feeling of life sin, in accordance with divine order, rather works in the feeling of guilt that has been awakened by conscience a depression of the feeling of life through the burden of the duty that has remained unfulfilled and now can no longer be fulfilled.

The Biblical narrative states that the first expression of the feeling of guilt was shame (Gen. iii. 17). Shame shows itself when man no longer wants to be seen as he is, because he feels that he no longer is what he ought to be. But bodily shame is only the consequence of moral shame; in the state of innocence man knew as little of the one kind as he did of the other (Gen. ii. 2-5). Only through the feeling of guilt shame was aroused. Immediately fear also follows, that would hide itself from the presence of God (Gen. iii. 8), because man feels that his normal relation toward God has been disturbed by sin; that God can no longer do to him, what He did to him before; that He can no longer bless him but must punish him. This is the punishment that fear has already in itself (1 John iv. 18), that it severs the original relationship of love between God and man. Man feels that he deserves punishment from God (Rom. iii. 19; Matt. v. 22), and the fear of punishment is a new hindrance to his life, which sin has brought him instead of the expected advancement. Punishment is the necessary reaction of divine holiness against sin; every sin merits punishment. It is true that he who sins out of ignorance receives less punishment

(Luke xii. 47), and he who had better reasons to avoid sin receives heavier (Matt. xi. 21-24); but all sin nevertheless deserves its punishment. The Holy God who cannot ignore sin reveals Himself as the Holy God, in this that He makes man, who does not recognize his sin as such or actually does not acknowledge it, to feel it in its consequences as being that which should not be.

It is significant that the Scripture uses the same terms (*κακόν, πονηρόν*) in order to designate that which is morally wrong as well as the evil that results, because the two are inseparably connected. God does not inflict upon each sinner a special evil in accordance with some criminal code; he punishes man by permitting him to suffer the consequences of his sins. But by the very fact that He causes him to feel the necessary consequences of sin, as also in the consciousness of his guilt and in the fear of punishment, this sin thereby is felt as the opposite of the will of God, as directed by His love for the good of man, i. e., as that which should not be (cf. Rom. vii. 13). In this respect, too, the narrative in Genesis turns out to be typical in that it mentions only those consequences of sin which make themselves felt among men in the most marked degree, such as the birth pangs of the woman, her slavish subordination to man, and his work in the sweat of his brow (Gen. iii. 16-19). It is, however, clear that all social as well as physical evils are the natural results of sin; the former in so far as they originate in the disturbance which sin has introduced into the divinely arranged social order among men; the latter, because man has not attained the mastery over the world for which he was intended, in consequence of the sin that prevented his securing this in the divinely ordained way. The world around and about him, which he in a manner contrary to the will of God would make the object of his pleasure, becomes for him only a cause of constant hindrance of life, a source of evil and suffering. Not only the dangers with which the

world threatens man, but also the curse of the transitoriness that overhangs it, and under the burden of which the Apostle hears the groanings of nature (Rom. viii. 22) Paul considers as the consequences of sin (Rom. viii. 20). Now the work of man in nature has become a hard task that in spite of this does not bring him abundance and gratification but often need and suffering.

In the most direct way man experiences the consequences of his sins in the nature side of his own existence, not only when sickness is the direct outcome of his sins (John v. 14; Matt. ix. 2), but in the decrepit condition of the body in general (2 Cor. iv. 7), since the supremacy of the spirit over nature has been lost to him. Thereby the existence of death is already given, which had been threatened as a punishment for his sin (Gen. ii. 27), because in consequence of his sin he lost the right and the power to eat from the tree of life (Gen. iii. 22, 24). Through sin death came into the world (Rom. v. 12), which throughout the New Testament is represented as the punishment for sin (Rom. vi. 23; James i. 15; 1 John v. 16). Life which could primarily be only a life of this world for man as he came forth from the hand of God, is regarded by the Scriptures as an invaluable possession, the withdrawal of which is punishment. This latter is the case particularly when an early, rapid or violent death removes man (Gen. vi.; cf. Luke xiii. 3, 5). And even if in the case of a long and blessed old age death seems to lose its terrors, when the Patriarchs die, aged and satisfied with life and are gathered to the Father (Gen. xxv. 8), it nevertheless remains a fact that, the decay of human life is a sign of the judgment of God over sin (Ps. xc. 7-10). Death, which stands out opposed to the original purpose of God's love for man, is the last enemy who is to be overpowered by the redemption (1 Cor. xv. 26).

The Scriptures never make the attempt to explain away the terrors that death has in store for man. Heb. ii. 15 tells

us that these keep us in bondage all our life. The violent separation of soul and body, which latter is then doomed to decay, continues to be a painful evil, of which even the Apostle Paul prays to be relieved (2 Cor. 5, 3-4). The endless continuance of the soul, which has in a most mistaken manner been called immortality, is no blessing for the sinner who lives only for this world, but is a curse. Separated from everything wherein it here found its greatest good and deprived of the body as the necessary organ of all of its active and passive energy, the soul continues in its separation from the body in a shadowy existence which has no true life. In this manner the Old Testament describes the existence in Sheol; and thus the heathen describes, in so far as it was clear to them that the sinner was deserving of death (Rom. i. 32), the existence in Hades as an eternal longing that is never satisfied, an everlasting striving that never attains its purpose. Bodily death, in case there are no hopes of a resurrection from the condition of death, in itself leads to the misery of an eternal death. The detail representations of this condition of death belong to the sphere of the imagination; a revealed account of this is not and cannot be given in accordance with the character of revelation (Luke xvi. 27-31). As heaven, the abiding place of God, is represented as the world above, thus the place of the dead is called the world below (Phil. ii. 10; Matt. xi. 23). A change in the conditions in Hades, such as are presupposed by Jesus in Luke xvi. 22-23, and is described there in strong colors, without which we cannot picture it for ourselves, can only find a place here when through the religion of redemption a ray of light and life falls into this region. But leaving this out of consideration, the fact remains that the gates of Hades are the strongest that exist (Matt. xvi. 18), because none can open them when they have once been closed on the sinner.

4. **The Universality of Sin.**—The first man was not the only one who sinned. Early it was seen that all flesh was

corrupt before God (Gen. vi. 13-14); that all men's thoughts were corrupt continually (Gen. vi. 5). Even in the best times the prophets of Israel charge the entire people with rebellion; and all the more is this done in the degenerate days of the people. There is no man who does not sin (1 Kings viii. 46); and before God none are justified (Ps. cxliii. 2). The New Testament everywhere treats this as a self-evident fact. The Baptist and Jesus himself make appeal for a change of heart, not to individual sinners or to special classes as transgressors, but to the entire people. Jesus calls man, as such, wicked as distinguished from God (Matt. vii. 11). None is good but God (Matt. xix. 17). None has developed this subject more deeply or as a matter of principle than the Apostle Paul, who shows in Rom. i. to iii. that all men have sinned and come short in the glory (the righteousness) that avails before God (Rom. iii. 23). This does not say that the sinful condition of all is the same. From the very beginning the Old Testament distinguishes between the development of the generation of Cain and that of Seth. Noah was a just man and Enoch walked with God (Gen. vi. 9; v. 24). The Patriarchs stand out prominently as shining lights of piety, although the Old Testament does not conceal the fact of their sins (cf. also Is. xlv. 27); and the pious appeal to their righteousness over against God (Ps. xviii. 20), although at the same time they pray for grace and pardon. This is not to be attributed to the fact that the Old Testament has not yet recognized the depth and the universality of the corruption caused by sin, although naturally the knowledge of this is also progressively developed in the Scriptures. For side by side with this, is found the view that unholy man does not come into the presence of the Holy God without suffering death (Is. vi. 5); and the Old Testament ordinance of sacrifice offers atonement for the entire people. Jesus, too, speaks plainly of the good and the bad, of the just and the unjust (Matt. v. 45),

and in this He is followed by the whole New Testament. Only Paul on principle avoids this expression, although he, too, calls himself blameless touching the righteousness which is of the law (Phil. iii. 6). But this cannot change the general judgment in reference to mankind, since God can be well pleased only toward those who keep all of His commandments (Gal. iii. 10). But he who keeps all the commandments but offends in one is guilty of them all (James ii. 10).

The Apostle Paul finds the reason for this fact that the sinful condition of man has become universal, although in degree and kind it may differ, in this, that sin has become the ruling power in the world (Rom. v. 21), and that, too, from the beginning of the history of man (Rom. v. 12). This is not accidental but is based upon the divinely ordained connection of moral life. It is not so and should not be so, that every man at each moment is to have this liberty to choose between good and evil; for each single act contributes to the production of a moral condition and this moral condition aids in the production of each expression of the will power. In this significant inter-relation is to be found the curse of the evil deed, that must continually bring forth evil. Paul recognizes a revelation of the judgment of divine wrath in this, that God punishes sin by sin, that He permits the sinner continually to fall into deeper sin in accordance with psychological laws (Rom. i. 18 sqq.). Man who seeks a false liberty in sin must now experience the fact that he has only exchanged the servitude of God or of righteousness for the servitude of sin (Rom. vi. 20). Every one who commits sin is the servant of sin (John viii. 34). Man discovers that when he purposes to do what is good, he no longer can do it (Rom. vii. 15, 19); that he, indeed, still wills it, but has not the power of accomplishing this (Rom. vii. 18). Over against the very divine law, it appears that the carnal nature of man which through sin has been turned

against God, will not become submissive (Rom. viii. 7; cf. vii. 14), and becomes weak in the presence of the law (Rom. viii. 3). This is the divine judgment of hardening, that he who for a long time will not listen at last, in accordance with the divinely ordained laws of our souls, no longer can hear (Matt. xiii. 13 sqq.; John xii. 39-40; after Is. vi. 9-10). "Can an Ethiopian change his skin, or a leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. xiii. 23). This is spiritual death (Luke xv. 32; Rom. vii. 10; Eph. ii. 1), the extreme antipodal state to that progress of life which man by his sin attempted to achieve.

But the impossibility of fulfilling the divine will, which nevertheless should be entirely fulfilled if man would be pleasing in the sight of God, is by no means identical with the necessity of sinning and therefore does not relieve him of the responsibility for what he does. It is true that in His judgment on sin God does not forget the natural weakness of man (Ps. ciii. 14); but just because of the weakness of the flesh man should watch and pray (Matt. xiv. 38). Even in the most depraved of men the image of God has not been entirely destroyed since even he has not ceased to be a human creature and conscience alone constitutes a constant reaction of the original moral sensibility against sin. Although Paul declares it to be the deepest stage of moral degradation when one finds pleasure in the wickedness of others (Rom. i. 34), he yet knows of heathens who by nature do the deeds of the law (Rom. ii. 14, 26-27). The same prophets who announce to the people the judgment of hardening, continue with their exhortations to repent, and Paul confidently counts upon the final conversion of hardened Israel (2 Cor. iii. 15-16; Rom. xv. 25). Although men from the very moment he becomes conscious of self and of his self-determination feels himself bound by a moral obligation, the origin of which lies beyond his conscious moral life, his conscience nevertheless condemns as sin his deeds that are

in part at any rate conditioned thereby. There are no limitations which separate his voluntary sins from those that arise out of his moral condition; and if there were such, they would not do him any good, since every sin continues to merit punishment, including those that are not committed with a full consciousness. Even for the faults that are hidden to himself man must pray for forgiveness (Ps. xix. 12).

Man becomes conscious of the supremacy of sin not only through the moral responsibility which he finds within himself, but also by the fact that sin has affected the social life with which he is connected and through this influences him also. The sin of the one brings with it the sin of the other (Gen. xx. 9; xvi. 10). It is not only the evil example that leads to sin. The individual is constantly being influenced by the moral character of the circle in which he moves. But as he just as much determines through his acts the moral tone of his surroundings, he is never able to separate his sin from that which has been produced by the community. Isaiah not only fears the presence of God, because he himself is unclean, but also because he dwells among a people that is unclean (Is. vi. 15). A curse rests upon Israel on account of the sins of one of the people (Is. vii. 13). As God on account of the piety of individuals spares the community (Gen. xviii. 24-32); so, too, the pious must bear the punishment for sins that is inflicted upon the wicked community. In the same indissoluble communion the individual stands also with the generation that have preceded the age to which he belongs. By the very fact that a sinful conduct was inherited from the father, it exercises an enslaving power over the individual (1 Pet. i. 18). But as little as man can separate his own personal sins from those received from others, just so little can he doubt that his own sin will again in turn be transmitted to coming generations. In God's eye not only the sins of the present generation but also that of

succeeding generations is common sin. As the blessings of the pious accrue to the children (Prov. xx. 7) thus God visits the sins of the parents upon the children to the third and fourth generation (Ex. xx. 5; Is. lxv. 7). Even in the furthestmost generations the sins of the parents can be punished (Matt. xxiii. 35), but naturally on the presupposition that the children are like the fathers and that the measure of their sin is full (Matt. xxiii. 30-31). For just as little as the sinful tendency of man relieves him of his responsibility in each case, so little does the sin of a generation make it impossible for him to be converted. Conversion can save the son from the curse which he has inherited from the father (Ezek. xviii. 19). None are to die on account of the sins of the fathers (Deut. xxiv. 16; 2 Kings xiv. 6).

5. **Original Sin.**—Since the sin of each generation continues in its effects on the coming generations, and the individual in his first moral self-consciousness always finds within himself a tendency to sin, this can be explained only by a natural transmission through physical descent (Ps. li. 5), cannot according to Old Testament thought be interpreted as meaning that the act of begetting is sinful, but only this that the sinfulness of the parents has been transmitted to the children. From the unclean no clean thing can come (Job. xiv. 4); none born of women are clean (Job. xv. 14; cf. Is. xlviii. 8). The equally inexplicable but yet undoubted fact that bodily and mental peculiarities, abilities, virtues and vices are transmitted by birth, suggests the idea that together with the essence of the soul itself the individual carnal fundamental tendency of the soul, as this has developed under the supremacy of sin is transmitted through bodily descent. In the New Testament this idea is indeed not found. In Eph. ii. 3 and John iii. 6, only in so far as here, from the fact that flesh can produce only a creature of flesh the conclusion is drawn that a regeneration is necessary for the production of a higher, ethico-religious spiritual life. In the normal

course of things this was intended to be developed in the creature of flesh as such, but this has been thwarted by the interference of sin. But since, as is shown by experience, the sinful condition of man has never been any other than that which it now is, the cause of this destruction must naturally be traced back through all the generations up to our first parents. This is done in Rom. v. 12, also in so far as the supremacy of the power of sin among men, because all have sinned, is ascribed to one man. And when Adam is expressly mentioned as this one man (Rom. v. 14), although in fact it was Eve who first sinned (1 Gen. iii 6; 1 Tim. ii. 14), the ground for this can be sought only in the fact that the act of begetting on the part of Adam formed the connecting link between that one man and the coming generation. The dire consequences of this act are expressly not attributed to the nature of man, but evidently with reference to Gen. iii., to his transgression (Rom. v. 15, 17-18), and this in v. 17, is designated expressly as disobedience, i. e., or a self-determination against the divine will. The tendency thereby brought about in man has through natural birth been transmitted to all of man's descendants and thereby has made the development of the religico-ethical life an impossibility in them.

It is a fact, however, that even a passage like Rom. v. 12 does not really want to say anything about so-called original sin. The purpose is rather to show that through one man (Adam) sin came over all men, just as though one man (Christ) eternal life came to all (Rom. v. 18). That through one man death came is apparent in the case of the first sin, since this consisted in the transgression of a law the punishment of which act was to be death (Gen. ii. 17). But the Apostle in Rom. v. 13-14, expressly points to the fact that between Adam and Moses, who repeated the doctrine that the transgression of the will of God was punishable with death, death also prevailed over all men, also over

those who unlike Adam had not transgressed a law the violation of which was to be death. From this he concludes that if death prevailed over all men because these, by the fact of their descent from Adam all have sinned, this must have had its ground in the fact that death was in the case of Adam once for all appointed as the punishment for sin, and that in this way death had found its way into the world through one man (1 Cor. xv. 21-22). Only exegetical and dogmatical prejudice can find here on the basis of a juridic process an idea totally foreign to the Scriptures, viz.: the thought that the sins of Adam have been imputed to his descendants and are therefore to be punished in the same way as his were. In Rom. v. 19, too, he does not say that in consequence of such an imputation the many were regarded as sinners on account of the disobedience of the one, but that through him they stand as sinners, have been changed into the state of sinfulness, in so far as the guilt that began with the disobedience of the ancestors of the race has been inherited by his descendants.

If then death has come over all mankind this is certainly not the result of an arbitrary decree of punishment, but because already in the case of the first sin it became evident that death is the inevitable result of sin. The fact that man was for all time refused access to the tree of life (Gen. iii. 22-24) was the natural result of this, that after having through sin made himself the servant of the nature side of his being, man could no longer through his supremacy and control over the world, raise his own nature side, nor also all nature around him into that state of perfection for which it was intended, nor thus develop to an imperishable glory. Man did not become mortal through his sin, but in consequence of it he continued in his mortal state. He has lost the ability of attaining immortality. It is accordingly no contradiction when in 1 Cor. xv. 47-49 the condition of mortality common to all men is clearly regarded as the con-

sequences of the earthly character of his body. That this has continued to be earthly instead of being changed or transformed from a psychical into a spiritual condition (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 44) is itself a consequence of this sin. This as little as the government of sin that came over all mankind is something accidental, but is rather something found in the nature of man as God has created him and is therefore a necessity.

Certain it seems then that thereby the very purpose of his whole creation had been thwarted. Man had not attained to communion with God and to a participation in His blessedness, but had become the prey of temporal and eternal destruction. But from this it does not follow that the fall was included in the eternal counsel of redemption, the realization of which began with the creation. Certainly this was not the case in the sense that sin in itself is a necessary intermediate state, which must be in harmony neither with the holiness nor the love of God. Not with the former, because according to it God could not have created a world in which sin, which is inconsistent with his holiness, would have been a necessity; nor with the latter, because even if the destruction that has been brought about by sin has been undone again at last by the work of redemption. Yet all the nameless evils that sin has brought into the world in the course of their development could not have been intended by the love of God. Only the possibility of sin was given by the fact that man was created in the image of God. And if he thereby was endowed with the dangerous freedom to decide against the divine will and thereby to become the object of sin and death; on the other hand without this liberty, he could not have attained the goal for which he is created. In case that man would abuse this liberty, it was a part of that plan of God that a redemption should be prepared. True it is, that considering the depth and the universality of his sin, it was evident that man

could do nothing toward saving himself; but just as surely as the image of God could not be totally eradicated in him through his sin without destroying his very essence, so certainly, too, he continued to be capable of redemption. Just as in the necessary consequences of sin the connecting point for redemption was given, in so far as conscience, that had been awakened by sin, taught man to recognize sin as such and the actual experience of the misery that sin brought over him must arouse in him the longing for salvation.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD

1. **The Continuation of the Fallen World.**—For the Old Testament already it was a problem how God could suffer a world that had through sin become subject to destruction to continue to exist. It connects its explanation with the story of a deluge, which is current among all the nations, according to which the flood once covered all the earth, and it regarded this as a divine punishment for the universal corruption of mankind. Jesus also sees in it a picture of the final judgment (Matt. xxiv. 37 sqq.), as Peter sees in the deliverance of Noah and his family a figure of the deliverance from eternal destruction that has been secured through baptism (1 Pet. iii. 20-21). But God makes a covenant with Noah, in which He promises never again to destroy the earth on account of sin (Gen. ix. 9 sqq.). The Old Testament knows of no other reason for this than the mercy of God with the natural sinful condition of man (Gen. viii. 21). Only in the light of the New Testament is it made plain that all this is founded in Christ (Col. i. 17). Only in Him as in the preordained Redeemer has it been established that the world shall continue, since the entrance of sin could not permit it to exist on account of the holiness and the mercy of God, unless God had arranged for the redemption of the world. But if the world was appointed as an inheritance for the Son, who was to accomplish this redemption, then it was His mission to carry this redemption with the divine word of power through the ages, until the plan of divine love was consummated,

according to which He was to bring about the purification from sin (Heb. i. 3). It is the divine will of love that permits the world to continue in view of the coming redemption.

For this there is no need of the preservative activity of God. At times it may indeed seem to be the case as though the Scriptures taught that the whole course of the world depended upon a constant renewal of the creative power of God. He sends rain and sunshine (Matt. v. 45); he causes the fountains to send forth their water and the grass to grow (Ps. cxiv. 10, 14); He gives life and breath to all (Acts xvii. 28). But all this is merely the immediate expression of the religious consciousness that makes God the source of everything, whether it came from Him immediately or mediately. It is a mistake to think that the Scriptures while holding to their religious viewpoint do not know of a fixed order in nature. The praise of creation finds its highest expression in this, that God established a law which the different spheres of creation were not permitted to transgress and bases on this the continuance of the whole universe (Ps. cxviii. 6). When God promises to Noah not again to destroy the earth, He does so by sanctioning the continuance of the natural order of things (Gen. viii. 21-22). It is impossible to guarantee the unchangeableness of the order of nature more firmly than is done when this is set up as a pledge for the faithfulness of God over against His people (cf. Jer. xxxiii. 25-26). And yet here nothing is more foreign to the Scriptures than the irreligious idea, that the world, after being once created, must, like the works of a clock, go its way without any further interference on the part of the Maker. If the world continues to exist only through the loving will of God then everything that takes place through the divinely ordained law of nature is done in accordance with his knowledge and will. When He causes the vapors to rise from the ends of the earth, or prepares

lightning and rain and leads out the winds from His treasures (Ps. cxxxv. 7) this refers only to the origin of these phenomena in accordance with the law of nature, but they are all ascribed to God, who has established this order. The fact that He sends His word and ice melts, i. e., that at His command a thaw sets in, is in the parallelism ascribed to the warm southwind that causes the water to flow (Ps. cxlvii. 18). Heaven and earth continue according to His ordinances and they are His servants (Ps. cxix. 91) that carry out His will for the continuance of the world.

What is said of the maintenance of the whole world is true of all life in the world. There can be no life without the ability of showing forth its vitality; everything that lives has the power to sustain, nourish, and propagate itself in accordance with the laws appointed for it. Acts xvii. 28 does not say that God participates in every activity of life, but that in Him, i. e., in His will the ordinances appointed by Him all life, every movement of life, and our whole existence find the conditions of their being. Even the life of the creature not endowed with reason is reduced to the mere semblance of life if in each expression of life carried on in accordance with its own laws a divine co-operation takes place. Especially the life that has been created in accordance with the image of God is deprived of its real individuality if it is not based on the spiritual life which is developed in it in accordance with the divine order in mankind, i. e., on conscious self-determination (ch. vi. 4). The co-operation of God accompanying each of these acts of life would make man only a shadow or would be such itself. The creatures that have been created for reason and for liberty live and act in accordance with the vital powers and love that have been implanted into them, just as the irrational creatures do. The free life that is developed in them in accordance with their spiritual organism, i. e., through psychological laws, is just as much divinely willed as that

found in the laws of nature. If it is the loving will of God that the world shall continue to exist then, too, the life that has been implanted into man, for whom the whole world has been created, must be developed in accordance with his nature. This is the reason why, notwithstanding all the corruption by sin, the image of God in man has not been totally destroyed. Of course here, too, it is true, that it continues only because and as long as God so wills it. Individual life has no sudden existence. But even if no sparrow can fall from heaven without the will of God (Matt. x. 29) this does not make it impossible that its death takes place in accordance with the laws of nature. Man, indeed, was originally intended to an endless life. But after he had become the victim of sin his earthly existence is subject to the same laws as are the purely natural creatures. God takes his breath of life away and he returns to the dust (Ps. civ. 29; cf. Job xxxiv. 19). On the other hand, God sends health (Phil. ii. 27) and delivers from danger of death (2 Cor. i. 10-11) when He wills to lengthen life. He remembers Noah and sends the wind, and the water begins to fall (Gen. viii. 1).

2. **The Divine Providence.**—As certain as it is that the life of man would not be what it is in essence, if he did not possess the ability to form resolutions and a will to carry these out, so certain it is that the way of man, i. e., the carrying out of his will, does not stand in his power (Jer. x. 23). The heart of man devises his way but the Lord directs his steps (Prov. xvi. 9), i. e., He alone determines if man is to attain his object or not. The King does not conquer by the greatness of his armies nor is the mighty man delivered by the greatness of his strength (Ps. xxxiii. 16). Horses are prepared against the day of battle but safety is of the Lord (Prov. xxi. 31). Therefore, it is said: Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established (Prov. xvi. 3). It lies in the nature of

the case that this experience forces itself upon man especially when all of his efforts have little or no results. God brings the counsel of the heathen to naught; He makes the devices of the people of none effect (Ps. xxxiii. 10). The Lord who has His throne in heaven mocks at the hostile undertakings of men (Ps. ii. 4). He can at all times deliver His own out of the hands of their enemies and oppressors (Ps. xviii. 18), by putting to naught their devices through unforeseen interferences. He makes the winds his messenger and flames of fire his servants (Ps. civ. 4). It also occurs that the consequence of man's action turns out to be the opposite of what was intended; that he thought to do evil and God converted it into good (Gen. i. 20). On the other hand, every success depends upon God's giving to man the spirit of wisdom (Gen. xli. 38-39) and a heroic zeal (Judges xi. 29; 1 Sam. xi. 6), or upon His leading the heart of man to what will bring success (Prov. xxi. 1). But under all circumstances the fact remains that there are many thoughts in the hearts of men, but that it is God's counsel that decides the matter (Prov. xiv. 21). In this very matter is found the entire shortsightedness of man, that he can never foresee all the conditions and circumstances that underlie the success of an undertaking. The divine government of the world, however, consists in this, that God advances or hinders the success of human action, according as this agrees with His purposes. Neither an occurrence in nature in itself nor the action of a man can in itself attain to higher purposes. Every success depends upon the conditions that surround it. Only divine wisdom can so influence events that the outcome is in harmony with God's purposes. Just the very things that are entirely inexplicable to human thought and appear to the non-religious way of thinking purely accidental are for religious thought the work of the divine government of the world, the purpose of which this arrangement of events is made to serve.

The miracles of God, which are so often lauded in the Scriptures (cf. e. g., Ps. xevi. 3; xcvi. 1), are in no wise necessarily miracles in the dogmatical sense of the word. They are, as is already indicated by their name in the Old Testament, events that awaken amazement, and by the greatness of their results or by the power of the impression they make, produce an effect corresponding to a divine purpose. The examination as to whether they are brought about by natural causality or not does not in itself belong to the religious method of thinking. They are events which the Divine Providence through an arrangement of circumstances has made subservient to higher purposes, and this is made evident in a manner that cannot be doubted. This, too, is evident that the entirety of natural causalities will never be completely known. No natural science can affirm that there are not powers of a higher order than those which it has so far learned to know, and other laws than those that have so far been discovered. No method of historical investigation can know beyond any doubt in how far the actual results of human action can be figured out beforehand or are intentional. Wherever the natural causes of an event or of the concurrence of events, that have ended in the attainment of an intended purpose, are hidden from us, there the religious idea of the world accepts a miracle of Divine Providence. It is non-religious not to accept in the fullest degree this miracle of Providence as a miracle; i. e., as something effected by God.

It is true, however, that the Scriptures understand something different, even when they affirm that nothing is too great or too wonderful for God (Gen. xviii. 14), and that nothing is impossible for Him (Mark xiv. 36). He who has created the world and has Himself established its laws, according to which nature and the spiritual mind of man operate, cannot be found in His government of the world; i. e., in His activity that subserves His purposes, by natural

causalities. It is true, that the Scriptures make no mention of a breaking through of the order of nature, of a suspension and restoration of the laws of nature, by which in former times the miracle in the dogmatical sense was explained. The divinely ordained order of nature, according to which natural causes can have only those results that are contained in their own laws, is not violated by this, that a supernatural cause produces results which natural causes cannot produce. The Scriptures, indeed, make no mention of natural laws, according to which certain results in the visible world can be produced only by certain natural causes; and if there were such they could never be learned by experience through scientific methods. The fact of the creation of the world makes this impossible. Equally far from the Scriptures is also the thought, that God would declare the laws in nature that He has established in creation to be imperfect, if there is need at any time or place of a direct interference in the order of nature. Miracles in the real sense of the term do not belong to the sphere of the creative laws of God, but to His plan of redemption. We know the divine government of the world only in so far as it has been revealed to us in the world corrupted by sin. But sin has destroyed the original order of the world, and with its means man cannot attain his destiny. If it was necessary for the redemption of man that an immediate activity of God be introduced, the reason for this is not to be found in the imperfection of the order of creation as this was made, but in the interference of sin, for which this order was not calculated. If the divine order of the government of the world requires miracles, this conclusion only follows, that the final purpose of this government is everywhere the redemption of man from sin, his restoration to his original destiny.

3. **Sin and Evil in the Light of the Divine Providence.**—As God to attain His purpose in the world

had created beings with the power of free self-determination, He could not and would not prevent them from deciding on a course of action against His will and laws contrary to His purposes. But when with the advent of sin this condition had actually come to pass, then even the development of sin's course had to become subservient to His purpose. But sin, after it has once become a factor in the history of the world, can exercise its activity only in accordance with the laws of God, as this is the case with every other historical development. He permits the nations to go their own way (Acts xiv. 16); He suffers His own nation to follow the perversity of its own heart (Ps. lxxxi. 13). This is no indifferent permission; He suffers it because it serves His purposes. Sin must reach its own legitimate outcome; i. e., must through its own development make known entirely its real character as that which it is (Rom. vii. 13), because the knowledge of sin is the first prerequisite for the conquest over sin. Men are to see whether they are drifting in their self-appointed way. In this way God suffers the Gentile nations to learn by experience through the punishments of His wrath, how sin ever begets sin (Rom. i. 18; xxiv. 28). The same thing He does in the case of Israel, when He through His Law makes sin abound (Rom. v. 20). What the Scriptures call hardening (Rom. ix. 18; xi. 7) is not an act of predestinarian arbitrariness, but is a judgment of God, according to which he who until now would not, finally gets so far that he cannot, as a "recompense," as Paul, Rom. xi. 10, on the basis of Ps. lxxix. 23 says in unmistakable words. It is both said that Pharaoh hardened his heart, as also that God hardened it (Ex. viii. 28; vi. 12). God does not cause the increase in sin; but the laws ordained by Him in the spiritual life of man have this effect, and it is His will that they should have and retain this effect. The result of the decision of man against the divine will of God could at any moment make of none effect and thus hew

the development of sin; but He does not do so if its success corresponds to His purposes. He makes use of evil men and their actions as a scourge for His people, although these have in all of their doings other purposes (Is. x. 5 sqq.). His punishments, too, everywhere serve the ends of his redemption.

For what is said of sin must also be said of the evil that has by divine arrangement come into the world as the necessary consequences of sin, both of the social and the physical evil. In the original world plan of God evil had no place; but in the world as corrupted by sin, it must serve the purposes of God's government of the world. He makes evil as He creates deliverance (Is. xlv. 7). There is no evil in the city that the Lord has not done (Amos iii. 6). As He sends rain and fruitful seasons, He also sends dryness and unfruitfulness for the purpose of recompense (Deut. xi. 13-17); He punishes sin with sickness (John v. 14; 1 Cor. xi. 30). The shortsighted man indeed takes offense at the presence of evil and its distribution in the world, especially if it falls to the fate of the pious to suffer. The problem of a Theodicy is discussed as early as the book of Job. The question here is the mistaken idea that the evil which God has ordained for the world as a consequence and punishment for sin must be such also in individual cases. This idea Christ opposed in most unmistakable terms (Luke xiii. 2-5). He tells us that those who are not afflicted with evils are thereby not the less sinners. The more deeply the immorality of sin is recognized the clearer it becomes, that everybody partakes of sin, so that everybody, too, must bear a part of the burden of the evil that sin has brought into the world. But as God has ordained evil in general as the consequence of sin in order that men may thereby learn to recognize sin as the source of misery, thus it now, too, serves only his redemptive purposes in his government of the world, all of which have as their one single purpose the deliverance

from sin. For this reason God also makes use of sin after it has once been brought into the world for the education of mankind, for his deliverance from sin. If we are judged by the Lord, then we are chastened by the Lord so that we be not condemned with the world (1 Cor. xi. 32). That God co-operates in all our affairs for our own good, we can only believe when we have recognized the fact, that He has destined for us not the temporal, fleeting joy of earth, but eternal redemption (Rom. viii. 28). All the enigmas of life can be solved only in the light of the perfected revelation of redemption in Christ. When the disciples of Jesus asked Him why the beggar had been born blind, He answered, that the works of God should be made manifest in him (John ix. 2-3). The following verses show how this is to be understood: The man born blind was to attain deliverance not only from his misfortune through his healing but through this was to attain eternal life. But the main thing in Christ's answer is what He indicates in a most unmistakable way, namely, that it does not behoove *us* to ask what the intentions of God are in any particular misfortune but what He would have us do in view of it (John ix. 4). This was the case with Him when He proceeded to heal the man born blind; but He purposely puts the sentence in a general form. Only then when we recognize what lesson the misfortune is to teach us, be it ours, or another's, will we know what God in the purposes of His love wills to do thereby.

The divine government of the world can be understood only in the light of its final purposes. This goal is definitely appointed; but from this it does not follow, that the way to the attainment of this goal is once for all settled. It is the fatalism of heathenism to believe in a world plan that has been definitely determined in all of its details. If the history of the world develops in accordance with a previously determined programme, in which has been assigned to each creature his particular rôle, then there is no room left for

the governing activity of God. If God has created man after His image, then, too, He must suffer His government of the world to be influenced by man's free conduct. As, on the one hand, we are told (Ps. cxix. 16; John xi. 9) that the number of our days has been determined, thus, on the other, it is stated that the days of the pious are lengthened (Prov. iii. 1-2), and the days of the godless are shortened (Ps. lv. 24). The Scriptures do not hesitate to say, that God repents of the evil that He has threatened, and He does not permit it to come if the godless repent; nor to repent of the deliverance He has promised, if those to whom it has been promised do evil (Jer. xviii. 8, 10). There are no promises of God for individuals the fulfilment of which, whether this is so stated or not, is not dependent on his conduct. On the other hand, all His promises to hear prayer would be empty words, if God is not really influenced by prayers. This is the fundamental reason why sin and evil also, that seems to thwart His purposes, must nevertheless serve the purpose of His government of the world. The government of God does not consist in this that He does everything alone as He had determined this in His eternal counsel. If God had created a world of creatures endowed with freedom for the attainment of the purposes of His love; then these, too, must in the development of the world have freedom of action, without which they are not what they were created to be and will not become what they are intended to be. His wisdom would not be so manifold as it is described in Eph. iii. 10 if it alone determined what is needed for the attainment of its purposes. The Apostle Paul in the conclusion of his exposition of the hardening and the restoration of Israel, finds the highest triumph of divine love in this very thing that, notwithstanding the self-determination of man contrary to the will of God, which endangered the consummation of His redemptive plans, He nevertheless knows how to find ways, by which He can make use even of

the perverse conduct of man for His ends, and thus notwithstanding all this, secure his object (Rom. i. 33-36). This self-limitation of God, according to which He permits Himself to be influenced in His actions by the conduct of men, does not imply a curtailment of His government of the world, but is its greatest glorification, because it is the manifestation of His love that can and will attain its highest purposes only with free creatures.

4. **The Angels.**—Angels are often mentioned in the Bible as the servants of God in government of the world. In the Old Testament the Angel of the Lord is often the mediator of His divine revelation. For this reason his calling is paramount and his personality is lost in that of his Master. He speaks in the name of God, and is himself addressed and revered as God. But if for this reason to regard him as the Logos or the second person in the godhead, is a dogmatical fiction not founded in the Scriptures. The angels are nothing else than the servants of the Lord who carry out His will (Ps. ciii. 20-21); they watch over the pious (Ps. xci. 11-12) and carry them into Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 22); but they inflict the punishments of God on those who are carried away by a sudden or terrible death (2 Kings xix. 35; Acts xii. 23). It is only a sign how salvation is regarded as the real purpose of God's government of the world when in Heb. i. 14 the angels are in so many words simply called the servants of the work of redemption. Moses already saw the angel in the burning bush (Acts vii. 30-35). According to the teachings of later Judaism the angels were regarded as the mediators through whom God gave the Law (Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ii. 2; Acts vii. 38, 35). They transmit the revelation of God in the childhood's narratives of the Baptist and of Jesus as also in the story of the Resurrection and Ascension (Mark xvi. 5-6; Acts i. 10-11). They deliver the apostles and bring to them divine commands (Acts xii. 7-10; viii. 26; x. 3, 7). In the Apocalypse they transmit and interpret to

the Seer the visions of the future. Christ will appear in His return to judgment surrounded by angels (1 Thess. iii. 13); they gather the elect around Him (Matt. xxiv. 31), and consign the wicked to their punishment (Matt. xiii. 41).

But from all this it does not follow that the Scriptures give us a revelation concerning the angels or intend to give us a dogma of the angels. It is in general not the purpose of the Scriptures to furnish us with knowledge concerning supernatural things. They want to reveal God to us, in order to establish the true religion in us, and the aim of the Scriptures is to testify of the revelation through which He has done this. There is no place in the Biblical story of the creation of the world where, without arbitrariness, the creation of the angels can find a natural room, since this story purposes only to interpret to us the divine revelation that is contained in the creation already known to us. The Scriptures assume the creation of angels as a matter of fact and thereby accept it as Jesus Himself has done. It is natural in the religious view of the world that the activity of God is everywhere represented and vividly portrayed by explaining it as having been accomplished through His servants. It is equally arbitrary to deny the existence of the angels, because we do know and are to know the world only in so far as it has been given to us as an object of our domination, as it is to make the existence of angels a dogma of faith.

When an appeal is made to the fact that the Scriptures speak of the appearances of angels, which presuppose their existence, it is overlooked that this is primarily a natural literary form in which inner revelations can be vividly represented. This is clearly shown by the descriptions given of the words and conversations of the angels, as also by the simple fact, that the first Evangelist, in contradistinction from Luke always describes these as taking place in dreams (cf. also Acts. xxvii. 34). At any rate those who see in this

idea of the angels a curtailment of the Biblical truth, must decide which one of the Evangelists is in the right when two narrate that the women at the sepulchre had seen two angels and the other two know of only one, and how two of the writers accordingly came to make a mistake. The Scriptures themselves clearly show how this idea serves only the one purpose of vividly picturing the doings of God Himself when in Heb. i. 7 it is said, that God converts His angels into winds and His servants into flames of fire; it is also expressly said in the citation there given, that He makes winds to be His messenger and flames of fire to be His servants (Ps. civ. 4), so that He makes use of the phenomena of nature for His purposes. Jesus with a view to the dream of Jacob says, that the disciples could see the angel of God transmit to him divine help (John i. 51), and Mark reports of the Son of God who had been approved in the temptation, that the angels were ever ready to help Him (Mark i. 13). Jesus Himself has ascribed His wonderful deeds at times to the spirit that has been given to Him (Matt. xii. 28) and at times to God Himself, who worked these deeds through Him (John xiv. 10). When it is said in Matt. xxvi. 53 that God could send for His protection a legion of angels, this does not mean that He needs these, since He at all times knows that He is in communion with God and under His protection (John viii. 29), and if in Matt. xxiv. 31 He sends out His angels to gather together the elect, He nevertheless promises in John xiv. 3 that He will come personally to take His own home.

There are other reasons for maintaining how little the idea of the angels deals with fixed realities in the Scriptures. When the idea of the guardian angels for the nations (Dan. x. 13) or for individuals (Acts xii. 15), especially for the children (Matt. xviii. 10) is further developed in the Apocalypse that speaks of angels appointed over fire and water (Apoc. xiv. 18; xvi. 5), and that the single congrega-

tions have their guardian angels (Apoc. ii. 3) this idea gradually expands unconsciously in the apocalyptic letters into that of a representative personification of the congregations. It is not at all remarkable that contemporaneous descriptions are employed for the embellishment of what is said of the angels, even to including proper names (Michael in Apoc. xii. 7; Gabriel in Luke i. 19), further the idea of throne angels that stand in the very presence of God (Apoc. viii. 2, 6), of powerful angels, of archangels (1 Thess. iv. 16), and of different orders of angels (1 Pet. iii. 22). But how little importance Paul attaches to this can be seen from the fact that he mentions them in different orders and with different names (Eph. i. 21; Col. i. 16). In the apocalypse myriads of angels who surround the throne of God praising and glorifying Him appear entirely on the same level with the four living beings and the twenty-four elders, who certainly are only typical representatives of the creation and the redemption.

Here it becomes clear that it is another religious need which the idea of the angels is to serve, namely the need of seeing in its realized form and of picturing vividly the goal for which God has destined man. In this way the angels according to Job. xxxviii. 7 already surround God at the time of the creation, praising and glorifying Him, as the heavenly prototype of the family of God which Israel was destined to become. It is noteworthy how in the Old Testament this side of the idea of the angels is not yet fully developed, as in Job. iv. 18; xv. 15 they do not yet appear as without imperfection. On the other hand, it appears in Gal. i. 8 to be a hypothetical case, which is regarded as practically an impossibility that an angel could do anything wrong. They have no part in the redemption, because they do not stand in need of it (Heb. ii. 16), but they rejoice at the sight of redemption (1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. iii. 10). When Jesus wishes to describe the most perfect fulfilment of the

will of God He directs attention to the manner in which this is done by the angels in heaven (Matt. vi. 10). When He wants to depict the heavenly glory to which the resurrection leads, He says that those who are risen will be like the angels in heaven (Mark xii. 25), who indeed are regarded as spirits (Heb. i. 14), but with a heavenly body (1 Cor. xv. 40). Paul considers it as the highest purpose of their existence that they be united with redeemed mankind under Christ as its head (Eph. i. 10), and in this way the separation that has been made through the sin of man between the spiritual world of the earth and that of heaven be removed again. They appear as invisible beings present in the congregation, admonishing and warning them (1 Cor. iv. 9; xi. 10; 1 Tim. v. 21). The Scriptures have only this one interest in the over against errors that put in their appearance at an early date, to preserve this idea in its purity. In this interest Paul emphasizes the fact, that the angels are included in the totality of creatures that were made in Christ (Col. i. 16); and as the Revelation of John expressly declares against the worship of angels (Apoc. xix. 20; xxii. 8-9), thus Paul opposes every kind of angel service (Col. ii. 18, 23).

5. The Devil.—The enemy of God, who opposes the purposes of His love in government of the world, is throughout the Bible said to be the Devil. The serpent who tempted our first parents to sin is already in the Apocrypha (Wisdom ii. 24), and in the New Testament declared to be the Devil (2 Cor. xi. 3; Rev. xii. 9). Jesus declares that he was the murderer of men from the beginning, because through his temptation he brought death upon mankind (John viii. 44). All sin is his work (1 John iii. 8). He is called the prince of this world (John xii. 31; xvi. 11), because in the world that is hostile to God he rules supreme. Paul calls him the god of this world (2 Cor. iv. 4), because sinful man irresistibly falls a prey to his power (1 John v. 19). It is his spirit

that even now works in the sins of iniquity (Eph. ii. 2). He is engaged in a constant struggle against the work of redemption. He has tempted Christ (Matt. iv. 1 sqq.), and tempts the disciples (Luke xxii. 31); he has misled Judas and thus brought about the death of Jesus (Luke xxii. 3; John xiii. 27). He prevents the success of Jesus' discourses (Matt. xiii. 19, 39) as he interferes with the work of His messengers and seeks to thwart their work (1 Thess. ii. 18; iii. 5), until he is deprived of his power by the returned Messiah (Rev. xx. 2).

And yet here, too, it must be said that the Scriptures do not contain a doctrine of the devil. When it is said in 1 John iii. 8, that he sinned from the beginning, i. e., made a beginning of sinning, this does not at all mean that he was from the very outset a wicked principle in the dualistic sense. The Scriptures do not even consider it worth while to deny this error, which is fundamentally antagonistic to their religious teachings. When in John viii. 44, the fact that he does not stand in the (objective) truth is based on this, that the (subjective) truth, i. e., love and desire for the truth is not in him, the psychological motive here would be a senseless tautology, if both in the same manner were a part of the natural condition of the devil. But it is only through a misinterpretation of the sense and the words in this passage or in such passages as Luke x.; xviii. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 6, that the doctrine of the fall of the devil into sin is found here. The Scriptures know nothing of this; and yet this would be the first and the most natural thing that would have to be said by way of doctrine concerning the devil. Here, accordingly, we are still dealing with a conception that impressed itself through necessity upon religious consciousness. The deeper the knowledge of sin becomes, the more necessary the superhuman power of sin also becomes, by which it deceives man, corrupts and rules him; and since this sin cannot be ascribed to God, it is attributed to a

superhuman enemy of God. The Scriptures and Jesus Himself accept this view as they find it and have thereby given it sanction. It is perfectly arbitrary to deny to the idea of a Devil its claims, as we certainly can not claim to be able to measure all the boundaries of the creation of God; but it is equally arbitrary to make the existence of the devil a dogma of faith.

In the Old Testament we see only the beginnings of this idea. Satan still appears here as an angel of God, who stands before His face, although he finds pleasure in accusing and tempting men (Job. i.; Zech. iii.; cf. 1 Kings xxii. 19 sqq.). In Judges ix. 23; 1 Sam. xvi. 44, when God Himself sends an evil spirit, this is only to express the idea that God permits the sinner through deception and temptation to fall into deeper sin. And when God (2 Sam. xxiv.) in His anger causes David to make an innumeration of the people, we are told by 1 Chron. xxi. that this is the work of Satan. It is a matter of no significance at all, if later ideas taken from foreign sources influenced the formal development of this idea in Israel. As we learn from the New Testament this is merely the expression of a deeper insight into the superhuman power of sin. Among these ideas must be reckoned the notion of a whole kingdom of devils (Matt. xii. 26), of unclean spirits, demons or angels (1 Cor. vi. 3; Matt. xxv. 41; Rev. xxiv. 7, 9), who like the good have their different ranks (1 Cor. xv. 24; Col. ii. 15), who dwell in the desert (Rev. xviii. 2; or in the air that surrounds the earth, Eph. ii. 2), and as spirits without bodies desire to enter into the bodies of men or of animals (Matt. viii. 31). In connection with this appears the idea according to which these devil angels are fallen angels, whose fall was caused by the devil (Rev. ix. 1; xvii. 9). The story of the sons of God (Gen. vi. 1 sqq.) is interpreted as referring to the fall of the angels (Jude i. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4). On the other hand, the idea of elementary spirits or of the spirits of the stars,

who are claimed by many modern theologians to have even taken a part in the giving of the law, can find no exegetical ground in the New Testament and is entirely contrary to its spirit. In the New Testament the devil or Satan is the evil one pure and simple (Matt. xiii. 19; 1 John ii. 13), even if he bears the more popular name, such as Belial (2 Cor. vi. 15), or Beelzebub (Mark ii. 22).

A certain deviation in the idea appears only in the relation between the devil and the evil which is the consequence of sin. This appears most clearly in connection with the demoniacs. However much popular superstition may be found in the idea of being possessed by the devil, in the New Testament the matter is nevertheless always regarded from a spiritual point of view. It is not otherwise when the devil enters Judas, in order to lead him to betray Christ, and when the spirit of the antichrist inspires his pseudo-prophets (1 John iv. 1 sqq.), or when those possessed are in the power of the unclean spirit, who inspires them (Mark i. 23-34). And when in these accounts the fact of that spiritual subjugation under the evil powers brings with it also sicknesses of a physical or psychical kind in those possessed, it is only natural that these are ascribed to the workings of the evil spirit who have them in his power and speaks out of them. As the devils know that there is a God and tremble before His judgment (James ii. 19) those, too, who are possessed know the Messiah as the conqueror of the supremacy of Satan and fear that He will condemn them to the tortures of hell (Matt. viii. 29). In the consequences of their sins those possessed become conscious of the fact that they are in the control of Satan's power, and this awakens in them the desire for deliverance, which is then given them when the devils are expelled by Christ. Both facts, however, show that the modern idea according to which those possessed were persons suffering only from nervous disorder is altogether irreconcilable with the data found in

the New Testament. But other sicknesses also are ascribed to Satan (Luke iv. 39), when we see a certain deviation in our traditions, according to which sicknesses also that are not originally connected with possession by the devil are described as such (Luke xiii. 11 sqq.; Matt. xvii. 15-16, 18).

But as a superhuman being the devil is endowed with higher powers and can perform wonders and miracles (2 Thess. ii. 9). Paul delivers up the unrepentant sinner to Satan that he should vex him with bodily illness (1 Cor. v. 5), and ascribes a painful suffering that afflicts himself to the angel of Satan, who strikes him with fists (2 Cor. xii. 7). But if he is in the former case conscious of the fact that this is only done by the power and at the directions of Christ and if in the latter case he petitions Christ for deliverance from his sufferings (2 Cor. xii. 8) it becomes clear that Satan's power over the natural life is regarded as extending only so far as this is the will of God. To this belong also the terrible plagues which are brought about by the angels of Satan (Rev. ix.), and yet are considered as divine punishments that are to lead to repentance (Rev. ix. 20). But the devil is considered as the ruler over death (Heb. ii. 14) only in so far as he makes use of death as a means of bringing man under his control and of delivering him up to destruction, into which he purposed to lead him through the temptation to sin. This is in substance the same as where in 1 Cor. xv. 56 sin is described as a sting, with which death slays man. Just as in this passage redemption is described as having deprived death of this power, thus in the other passages the devil is deprived of his power and thereby the danger of death is removed. In general the Scriptures here also evince only the purpose of guarding this idea against any abuse for the excuse of sin. The rule over the world has been given to Satan by God (Luke iv. 6); i. e., only over that world which through sin has become subject to him. As he found nothing in Christ through

which he could tempt Him (John xiv. 30), thus he flees when the pious resist him (James iv. 7). The whole work of redemption has for its purpose to rob him of his power. The Scriptures have nothing to say of any hopes of Satan or his angels for redemption. For them eternal fire has been prepared (Matt. xxv. 41), to which Satan, after his final overthrow, will be assigned (Rev. xx. 10).

CHAPTER IX

THE PREPARATION OF REDEMPTION

1. **The Heathen World.**—If the supreme object of the divine government of the world is the deliverance of mankind from sin, which has prevented mankind from attaining the goal destined for it, then there runs through the whole pre-Christian history, like a golden cord, the preparation for the realization of the revelation of redemption in Christ. When it is said that God permitted the nations to go their own way (Acts xiv. 16) this only means that He did not guide them into the way of a history of redemption in the narrower sense as He did Israel; but not that He thereby did not intend to prepare them also for redemption. Paul, indeed, looks upon the age of heathendom as the time of ignorance, but when he says that God “winked at” them (Acts xvii. 30) he does not wish to maintain that this ignorance was entirely without their fault. Through the original revelation it would have been possible for the heathen to know God; but as they did not make use of these means as they should have done, they remained ignorant and babes (Rom. ii. 20) as is natural in the infant stage of mankind. What they possessed of religion at that time could only be the weak and miserable elements of religion (Gal. iv. 19) that could not work what all religion is to work (pleasing God) or secure for them what it should attain (salvation). For while all religion is the voluntary worship of the true God they did not know the essence of God and were bound to the service of beings that in truth were not gods (Gal. iv. 8). But this view of heathendom as an elementary religion cor-

responding to the child age of mankind already points to a future, in which the divine education of the human race would develop this into religious manhood. It certainly was most natural for the apostles, both in their dealings with the new gentile congregations and in their mission sermons, to confine themselves to this idea. The heathen people, as they actually were, had received from their ancestors whatever of religion they possessed. Their unripe condition was then relatively not a fault of their own, even if it was displeasing to God.

But it was necessary to go one step farther in passing judgment on this primitive religion. Those so-called gods (1 Cor. viii. 5) whom the heathens worship were indeed in reality not gods at all, and yet not purely the production of phantasy, but were demons (1 Cor. x. 20). Paul was able to explain the departure of the heathens from the God who had revealed Himself in nature to the worship of other objects, after the manner of His times, as effected by the deceptions of the evil spirits, who had drawn the adoration of men to themselves. This was indeed only possible if men were led against their knowledge and will by these spirits to the dumb idols, in which they thought they were worshiping divinities but which were in reality demons (1 Cor. xii. 2). All the glory of Greek philosophy could appear as nothing but foolishness in the eyes of the Apostle, since they did not recognize God who had revealed His wisdom to them in the creation (1 Cor. i. 20-21), and by this very fact He considered them as condemned by the Old Testament (1 Cor. iii. 19-20).

To this was added that the demons could secure for themselves this worship only for the purpose of leading the heathen into immorality. The Apostle Paul everywhere considers as the cardinal sin of the gentile world licentiousness, which through the abuse of sexual relations destroys the foundation of social life, and then the greed, which over-

turns the divinely ordained relation of man to nature, by converting nature into an object of idolatry (Col. iii. 5; cf. Matt. vi. 24). Accordingly the characteristic feature of heathendom is spiritual darkness and a rebellion in principle against the order of God (2 Cor. vi. 14 sqq.). But in this very development, which out of this crude character of primitive religion, had to expand into this utter perversion of the religious and moral life, Paul recognized the judgment of God's providence. For the fact that men remained in that crude state was in reality the consequence of their own departure from the primitive religion and the adoption of the foolishness of idol worship and the wickedness of a service of nature (Rom. i. 21 sqq.). Paul accordingly does not at all see in idolatry the crude adoration of images; but when these images of men or animals, prepared skilfully out of gold and silver (Acts xvii. 29), are really thought to represent divinities, then these divinities necessarily were like the creature which they thereby substituted in place of God the Creator. However much they venerated these beings represented by the idols, they yet could be nothing but created things (Rom. i. 23-25). As Paul accordingly regards the worship of demons as a deification of the creature, he exposes also the sin of licentiousness of the heathen people in its most horrible form when it, too, leads to a perversion of the divine order of creation into the unnatural sins of lust (Rom. i. 24-27). But he sees in this an inner necessary connection, a judgment of God's wrath (Rom. i. 18), which as a punishment for the perversion of religion gave up the gentiles to a perversion of their moral life; and he considered as the acme of this punishment their subjection in a manner in which the moral power of discrimination is as good as eradicated (Rom. i. 28-31; cf. Eph. iv. 19). But for the very reason that he sees in this development a revelation of divine wrath, which punishes sin with sin by suffering sin to work out its own conse-

quences, he finds herein for his missionary sermons a basis to proclaim the impending judgment of God's wrath (1 Thess. i. 9-10; Acts xvii. 31-32). He presupposes that thereby the unconsciousness of certain destruction and a desire for deliverance from divine wrath is awakened in the heathen.

On the other hand Paul recognizes in the reverence for "unknown gods" a hidden desire for a higher and better religion even among the heathen (Acts xvii. 23), to which he can appeal in his message of redemption. And when he speaks of those who by nature do the will of God (Rom. ii. 14, 26-27), he must accept that the effects of the natural moral consciousness found in the original revelation and which can never be entirely eradicated, still bring about in a positive way in individuals a moral striving, which prepares to meet and accept the message of redemption. This is made still more prominent in John. However sharply the apocalypse may picture the gentile world as the real domain of Satan's supremacy, which is entirely closed to all the admonitions of God for repentance and out of which accordingly at some future time the powers hostile to God and Christ shall come forth. Yet this book, too, in accordance with the words of Jesus (John x. 16), knows of children found scattered among the heathens, who need only to be collected and put under the care of a good shepherd to become the Master's sheep (Apoc. xi. 52). John appears then even more strongly than Paul to recognize virtue and wisdom in the heathen world, which under the influence of preparatory grace would open the hearts for the coming redemption. There can probably be no doubt that he ascribes these effects to the Logos, who as the light of mankind in general enlightens also each individual (John i. 4, 9). If Paul more from the negative side sees in the development of the gentile world a divine educational process, which through the recognition of certain destruction to which this development leads, prepares the hearts for the message of the

redemptive grace, John has more from the positive side taught such a preparation for redemption in the gentile world. The fact that both apostles have no eye for the great and the beautiful that has been developed in the heathen world in other departments, is to be explained by this that they look upon them exclusively from a religious point of view.

2. **The Law of Israel.**—In Israel the real nature of the revelation of redemption was entirely different. The peculiar advantage enjoyed by Israel over the nations around does not consist primarily in the possession of the religious life that the others lacked, since the prophets at all times declared that this life was very defective in Israel and that the people were punished on account of their sins. This advantage consists rather in the peculiar relation in which God has entered with the people by selecting them in their fathers as His property and the object of His love (Rom. xi. 16, 28). Israel could boast of God as their God (Rom. ii. 17), they were His children (Rom. ix. 4), and this advantage on account of the fidelity of God could not be lost (Rom. iii. 3; ix. 29), independently of the questions how far in Israel the true religion, of which they were the bearers, had been realized. But to make this people in reality also His property, which it was destined to be, God had given them a law, an order of life that separated them from the surrounding heathen people as a wall of partition (Eph. ii. 14). In this law Israel possessed the knowledge of the divine will of the full development of the truth (Rom. ii. 20). In this passage the law is everywhere considered, as this is done by Jesus Himself (Matt. v. 18) as an indivisible entity (Gal. v. 3; cf. James ii. 10). A difference between the ethical, the ritual, and the social command is not known to the New Testament. Paul also counts among the advantages of Israel the cultus as established by the law (Rom. ix. 4). The modern idea that according to Paul a

part of it at least was added by the angels and the spirits of nature is totally without foundation and is contrary to the most direct statements of the apostle (cf. Rom. vii. 12). Of course it remained a fact that in Israel, too, this law was not fulfilled as it was to be fulfilled. Paul includes the Jews as well as the Gentiles in the condemnation of being under the supremacy of sin (Rom. iii. 9; cf. Eph. ii. 3). He emphasizes particularly that the law has included Israel also under its judgment of the universality of sin, since it lies in the nature of the law that it constantly lays open the difference between human obedience and divine command and in this way brings about a knowledge of sin (Rom. iii. 19-20). The apostle has himself had the experience under the law, that the law, for the very reason that it was given by the Holy Spirit, finds residence in the carnal nature of man (Rom. vii. 14) through which it becomes impossible to achieve its fulfilment (Rom. viii. 3). The same experience teaches that the positive command only incites to disobedience (Rom. vii. 7-11) and thus brings man under the supremacy of sin, which always brings renewed transgressions. But as these provoke the wrath of God (Rom. iv. 15) it had the appearance that the law did not prepare for redemption but prevented it. Nevertheless Paul had to consider this result as intended by God, because the law had been given to a sinful people, among whom there could be no other consequence. Therefore, he does not hesitate to use the seemingly paradoxical statement, that the law had been given to increase transgressions (Rom. v. 20; Gal. iii. 19), and thus, as it were, force man into disobedience, so that every other way to salvation would be closed to him than the one upon which God had intended to lead man (Gal. iii. 22-23). Man is to recognize that he by his own powers cannot attain to salvation, that he stands in need of divine grace. It is in this sense that Paul calls the law a school-master unto Christ (Gal. iii. 24), wherein He puts on the

same level the subjection of Israel to the law and the elementary beginnings of religion, as these were natural for man in his undeveloped state (Gal. iv. 2-9).

Naturally this view of the pedagogical significance of the law drawn from his own experience with the law is a one-sided view, as are all individual experiences. Paul who, according to his Pharisaical training, sought to win his salvation by the fulfilment of the law, had by this attempt been involved only more deeply in the destructive contradiction between the ideal and the real, between the willing and the fulfilling. His zeal for the law had forced him into the greatest sin of his life. And yet this conduct was typical of all those who seek to find the way to God through self-righteousness. But the history of Israel shows, that the law could also have an entirely different effect. In the Psalms we constantly hear the confessions of the pious, who had found their joy and highest delight in the law. We see from this, too, that they did not for this reason consider themselves as without sin, but constantly pray for forgiveness, but that they are also sure of forgiveness on account of the relation of love which connects them with God. It is clear, that all of these pious men were prepared in a positive way by the law for the full revelation of God in Christ, which alone could make possible for them a complete fulfilment of the law and hence the attainment of redemption. This side of the question is especially made prominent in the discourses of Jesus in John's gospel. If Christ finds in Israel those already who do the truth (John iii. 21); or are of the truth, because they permit themselves to be guided by the truth (John xviii. 37); or are of God (John viii. 47), this can have been effected in them only by the revelation of the law. It is noteworthy that John uses in this connection exactly the same expressions with which he in other places describes the state of Christian redemption. He saw in this already a preparatory realiza-

tion. Jesus has indeed said, that he who *wills* to do the will of God will know Him as the One that He is (John vii. 17). If the law had done nothing but arouse this will then it would have fulfilled its mission of leading to Christ. These souls thus made ready for the reception of salvation had been God's possession (Job xvii. 9), and thereby became the sheep of the flock of Christ (John x. 14, 27).

It seems as if all this could be said only of that part of the law which is of a specifically ethical character. But history has shown that this is not the case. The Epistle to the Hebrews shows that types of the salvation in Christ were also to be found in the levitical ordinances of atonement in the cultus (Heb. x. 1); and the grand elaboration of this idea in this Epistle has certainly brought many in Israel to understand the law. When Christ in the parable (Mark vii. 15) uses the levitical ordinances of purification as a picture of the moral cleansing demanded by Himself, this should above everything else awaken in earnest souls the consciousness of the fact that the former could be fulfilled only through the latter (Luke xi. 40). Just as the Prophets at all times had interpreted the bodily circumcision to refer to the purification of heart (ch. ii. 3). We will see how the New Testament age in many respects recognized the ordinances of the cultus in the Old Testament as deeply significant for salvation in Christ. The Apostle Paul also was not ignorant of this significance of the ordinances of the Old Testament law (Col. ii. 17). In this way the law with its ordinances had already a prophetic significance for Christ and points to a still more direct preparation of redemption in Israel.

3. The Promise.—In his second sermon (Acts iii. 25) Peter says that the promise to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18) had begun to be fulfilled in Christ. Paul also sees this fulfilled in Christ (Rom. vii. 13; Gal. iii. 16). Here, as well as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he knows perfectly well that in the

first instance this promise meant only a great progeny (Rom. iv. 18; Heb. vi. 13-14); but especially the latter already sees in these words a promise of the salvation that has come in its final heavenly perfection in Christ (Heb. xi. 10; xiii. 16). All the prophets of Israel have hoped for the final consummation of the revelation of God, in which the redemption that had been promised them would be realized; and their predictions have at all times kept this hope alive in Israel and thus prepared them for its fulfilment. This prediction was the announcement of the divine determination, according to which God Himself would bring about the completion of the Theocracy, the realization of the religico-ethical ideal. If, as we have learned, there is no divine world plan that foresees all the details in the development, this naturally applies also to the carrying out of this plan of redemption in Israel. Prophecy is not the prediction of special future events, only the heathen mantic art can claim to be such, because it is based on the presupposition of fate, that surely accomplishes its purposes without let or hindrance on the part of man. All the promises of God are conditioned by a certain conduct of man, and the manner of their fulfilment is measured by this, or in accordance with the holiness and the love of God, which direct His wisdom in the ways of their realization.

But naturally the prophets could not predict this divine plan of redemption in the form of an abstract dogma, if they intended to awaken in the people a lively hope of this future redemption. They could only portray the picture of redemption that had been awakened in themselves through the divine revelation, which picture had received its background through circumstances and the needs of their times. Therefore, the picture is as the prophets represented to themselves the coming of the future redemption, and is quite different, according to the individuality as also according to the historical situation of each prophet. Sometimes they think

that it will be inaugurated by God Himself, sometimes by the last and the greatest representative of God. Sometimes they expect the latter in the shape of a victorious king of the house of David, bringing an abundance of blessings; again as a servant of God, who bears the sins of the world. But at all times the hoped for redemption is considered as coming in the immediate future, because it is to come at the same time with the repentance of the people for which the prophets were laboring. Therefore, too, the latter can think of the realization of this perfection of the Theocracy only in the form that it could assume under the circumstances of their age. All the blessings that its advent must bring for the people are measured only by the needs of their times. None of the prophets have predicted the time or the hour, as 1 Pet. i. 10-11, expressly states, and therefore, too, not the kind or the form which the fulfilment would assume according to the conditions of the time when it appears. It is entirely useless to construct Messianic dogmatics out of the predictions of the prophets, as though they had a definite programme, according to which the future redemption would unfold itself.

The final realization of this plan has in reality left unfulfilled certain traits marked out by prophecy and has fulfilled others. This method of fulfilment it was that caused the tragic vicissitudes in the historical life of Christ, which finally in accordance with the counsel of God, nevertheless was made to serve the final completion of His work. On the other hand, it certainly was a providential guidance that so many prophetic details were actually fulfilled, just as the Old Testament seers had hoped and represented them, because only in this way it was possible to prove to the people that the salvation promised by the prophets had really appeared in Christ. For the religious significance of Jesus and the salvation that has appeared once for all in Him, it is, however, a matter of total indifference, whether He came from

the seed of David, or whether He was born in Bethlehem, or whether he entered Jerusalem as the King of Peace upon an ass; but it is a matter of essential importance for the production of faith in Him as the Messiah and for an understanding of what kind of a Messiah he claimed to be. It is in this case literally true that this had to be thus in order that the prophecy be fulfilled (Matt. xxi. 4). It was not thus predicted because it had to be thus; but it happened thus in order that in the appearance of Jesus the fulfilment of the divine plan of redemption as predicted by the prophets must be recognized as taking place in Jesus. It was a part of the preparation of redemption in Israel, that the people should receive Sacred Scriptures, in which not only the revelation of the divine will, but also the divine promise of redemption should be constantly presented to the eyes of the people through the prophets, in order to keep alive in them the hope of salvation. From these writings it was possible, when this promised redemption had come, to bring the proof that the message of redemption brought by the apostles had been foretold by the prophets in the sacred books (Rom. i. 1-2), and thus through the prophetic writings it could be demonstrated that the counsel of redemption that was now being realized was the one that had been predicted as being formed from eternity.

It indeed appears that in this way a great difficulty had been conjured up, because so many of the details of the prophetic pictures of the future have not been fulfilled. But this is a difficulty only for us who look at the predictions of the prophets from an historical point of view, i. e., who ask what was to be said to the contemporaries in these messages. For those times this difficulty had no existence, because the Bible study of those times did not ask such questions, but considered the Scriptures purely from a religious point of view, i. e., merely asked what God intended to say in them to those who read them (ch. xxxi.). It mani-

festly is a providential arrangement that this difficulty was not only unknown to the Bible study of this kind, but that rather it was possible to bring the proof of a literal fulfilment, through which the harmony between prophecy and fulfilment, and thereby the identity of the divine plan of redemption in the Old and in the New Testament times, were made evident in a clear and effective way. It is a misjudgment and misunderstanding of this divine providence, which did so much for the preparation of redemption, when by the application of exegetical trickery, that in the end is only self-deception, the New Testament interpretation is carried into the Old Testament Scriptures or the latter are interpreted according to the former.

4. **The Fulness of Time.**—Israel read in her Scriptures not only the law and the prophecies but also the history of the nation, of course not as an accurate narration of single details but as the representation of the divine guidance of the people for the purposes of His redemption. Then this entire history must serve the purpose of preparing for the time of the fulfilment of this redemption; this history could accordingly be perfectly understood only when in it a type and a figure of that which was yet to come was recognized. In this sense men have found in the entire history of Israel a typical prophecy; and in so far this is perfectly correct, as the divinely controlled history of the past, according to its real character and active principles, could be none other than like that of the future which it promised and for which it prepared. But when the attempt has been made to discover in individual persons and events of the Old Testament express types of the persons and the events of the future redemption, this is just so far correct and incorrect as the literal interpretation of the prophetic promises that refer to them. At any rate only the future could tell which events of the Messianic age could be read out of the doings of God in the past history of the people.

In this it was presupposed that the time of the appearance of Jesus was the very one toward which all the former dispensations of God were directed (1 Cor. x. 11). But this had been declared by Christ to be the case when He announced that the time had been fulfilled (Mark i. 15), which was to pass by before the preparation for redemption, which was necessary according to the counsel of God, had been completed. Paul compares this time with that which a father has determined by his testament before the son can be permitted independently to assume control of his inheritance (Gal. iv. 2, 4). Naturally this was not fixed chronologically, since only the future could show when through His government of the world the goal had been reached, which made possible the appearance of the perfect revelation of God. We try to show what general historical conditions mark the age as suitable for the advent of Christ and for His victory over the world. But as little as mankind can by itself, contribute anything to the promised and hoped for redemption, so little could the development of man contribute positively to the appearance of the proper time for the coming of this redemption. It could only be a question of bringing about either positively or negatively the receptivity for the coming redemption. To the greatest extent this was accomplished in the history of Israel; and for this reason Jesus not only made His appearance in Israel but also confined His activity as well as that of His disciples to Israel in accordance with the counsel of God. In the pious circles of Israel, in which the law and the promises had attained their object, such receptive souls were actually found, who as a result of the divine educational process had learned to understand and to long for redemption. But if there were only a few of these in Israel and if there were others outside of Israel (John x. 16) then the wall of separation had been torn down thereby, that so far had hemmed in the development of the history of redemption.

This had begun within the limitations of a single nation; but its purpose had not been attained in this people as a whole. By this fact a new element had been introduced into the realisation of redemption. In this manner the way had been prepared for the universality of Christianity.

PART TWO

THE REDEMPTION IN CHRIST

PART II

THE REDEMPTION IN CHRIST

CHAPTER X

THE SON OF GOD AND OF MAN

1. **The Messiah and the Sonship of God.**—The preaching of the Apostles begins with bringing the proof that the crucified and risen Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah (Acts ii. 36). The term taken by the theology of the times from Ps. ii. 2 (cf. Mark. xii. 35) designates Him who was prepared by God through the anointing of the Holy Spirit for the highest mission (Heb. i. 9, after Ps. xlv. 8; Luke iv. 18). The disciples recognised in Him the Anointed One (Mark viii. 29), which John explains in his gospel vi. 69 to mean, that He was in the eminent sense of the term the divinely chosen one (cf. also Mark iii. 11). The calling for which he was dedicated through His anointing need not be more closely designated; for through the prophetic predictions all Israel knew of Him who was to bring the religion, as it was founded in the Old Testament, to a full realisation, and thereby also bring about the spiritual and temporal redemption for which they longed. In the statement that Jesus is the Messiah His specifically religious significance is already expressed. We see here confirmed, that He was not to be a new teacher or lawgiver, still less the founder of a new religion, but the finisher and bringer of redemption.

But Jesus is the Messiah in so far as He is the Son of God. In the question of the High Priest (Mark xiv. 61) this name appears as a further designation of the Anointed One (cf. Matt. xvi. 16; 2 John 31). The one object of the predictions of the prophets and of the proclamation of the gospel is the Son of God (Rom. i. 3; cf. 2 Cor. i. 19-20). With this the New Testament expressly builds upon the Old. The name is not to be explained on the basis of what the New Testament says concerning Christ as the Son of God but on what the name signifies in the Old Testament. In the latter it is never the designation of a being but of the relationship upon which God has entered with His chosen ones. As God has selected Israel as His child, i. e., as the object of his fatherly love (Ex. iv. 22), in this way the theocratic King is in a special sense the chosen object of His fatherly care and training (2 Sam. vii. 14). It is only the ideal picture of such a King of whom it is said in the Messianically interpreted Ps. ii. (v. 2) that God salutes His anointed as His Son and thereby appoints Him to the Messianic government of the world (v. 7-8; cf. Heb. i. 5). But at His baptism and at His transfiguration the voice of God pronounces Jesus to be the Son of God and explains this expressly by declaring that He is one in whom God is well pleased (Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5; cf. Col. i. 13). In the preaching of the Apostles, too, this name primarily designates nothing that is said concerning the eternal and divine nature of this Son. If the greatness of the divine love is brought out by stating that God did not spare His only Son (Rom. viii. 32), or the only begotten Son, but gave Him as an atonement for the sins of the world (1 John iv. 9-10), the name of the Son here refers to the unique relationship of love in which God stands toward Him.

But Jesus Himself knows that He has been called to be the Messiah because He is in a unique sense the Son of God. However often He calls God His Father and the Father

of the members of His kingdom He never at *the same time* calls Him His and their Father. He alone is the Son pure and simple, to whom according to Matt. xi. 27, intrusted the work of carrying out all His counsels of redemption, and this because the Father knows Him as no one else knows Him. Because He is the Searcher of Hearts, God has learned to know Jesus as the one who is fitted to carry out His redemptive purposes, as we are already told in Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5, that He had found pleasure in Him. On the other hand, the relationship of love brings with it that no one knows the Father except the Son; that the latter alone is initiated in all of God's counsels and can therefore reveal the Father by carrying these out. Mark xiii. 32 also presupposes that the Son by the very fact that He is such must know better than the angels, who in a certain sense are also the sons of God (Job. xxxviii. 7), those plans of God that are hidden from all others. And when in the parable God seeks finally to attain through His Son what He had failed to accomplish through the sending of His servants (Matt. xxi. 37) this is interpreted in Mark xii. 6-7 to mean that the Son who has been appointed to be the heir of the Theocracy is the special object of the Father's love. John v. 19 also ascribes to the love of the Father for the Son the fact that the former shows Him how to accomplish all of His works and this for the reason, that it lies in the character of this peculiar sonship that the Son should not do anything independently but do only what He sees the Father do, whose doings are in every respect His models. In the same way in John ii. 16 he declares it to be the greatest evidence of the love of God that He gave His only begotten Son, i. e., the special object of His love, for the redemption of the world.

Only in this respect do the discourses of Christ in the fourth gospel go beyond those found in the older gospels, that they declare this relation of love to have existed before

all times (John xvii. 24), that accordingly Jesus' unique knowledge of God dates from His existence with God before all times (John vi. 36; viii. 36), from whom He has come and to whom He will again return (John v. 62; xvi. 27-28). The issue at stake here is not the historical question how far the apostle, who was conscious of the fact that he was reminded by the Spirit also of these words of Jesus, which had not found their way into the older gospel traditions (John xiv. 26), and through this same spirit was being reminded also of these phases of the truth, which Jesus could not yet reveal to His disciples, because they were not yet prepared for this (John xvi. 12-13), based their expositions on words that Christ had actually spoken. Certainly it is historically unthinkable that Jesus should have spoken in so direct and didactic a way as is reported by John concerning His pre-existing state with God, since this certainly belonged to those things which His disciples, and still more the Jews with whom He discoursed, could not yet bear (John xvi. 12). But this does not make it impossible that there were in the memory of the evangelist certain enigmatical sayings of Jesus, in which He had at least hinted at this deepest secret of His self-consciousness (cf. John viii. 23, 58; xvii. 5). At any rate the question of the nature of this unique Son of God cannot be answered on the basis of a critical examination of the genuineness of the gospel of John and of the extent to which the authentic words of Jesus or their interpretations by the evangelist are given in this gospel, in order to gain a firm ground for our faith in their gospel.

2. **The Eternal Godship of the Son.**—That the oldest traditions did not possess any sayings of Jesus that speak of His pre-existent state and of His superhuman nature that this state presupposes, is already seen from this, that the oldest apostolic traditions, as these appear in the addresses in the Acts or are found in Peter and

James, never make any mention of these things. On the other hand, this tradition knows as certain that Jesus through His resurrection has been raised to glory and dominion, as He Himself had predicted (Mark xiv. 64). But as soon as the religious reflection of the consequences of this act, which was originally received as a matter of fact in the redemptive work, was developed, the conclusion from these premises to an originally divine character of Jesus was a necessary step. On the presupposition of a religion of revelation the apotheosis of a human being is an absolute impossibility and a sinful blasphemy. The Pauline teachings on this subject are not based upon an application of any contemporaneous philosophies to Christ, but are the necessary conclusions drawn by religious consciousness from the appointment of the Son to a dignity equal to God (Rom. i. 4), to an original nature that made this appointment a possibility. The worship of the exalted Christ as God was possible for the monotheistic conscience only in case this Son was regarded as equal to God from eternity.

Such a conclusion we find also clearly expressed in 1 Cor. xv. 47, according to which He, who in His resurrection bestows upon mankind a body corresponding to their heavenly purposes, must Himself have been of divine origin in order to effect this. In Gal. iv. 4-5, the sending of the Son, who has secured for us the sonship, is considered as an altogether exceptional divine measure; because He was born of a woman and put under the law, who as Son stood in the free relationship of love with the Father before He was born. In the same way we read in Rom. viii. 3, that the Son, through whom sin was to be condemned in the flesh, was sent in the form of flesh, and accordingly in His original state did not have such flesh. Both passages teach that it was everywhere a matter of necessity for the religious consciousness of the apostle to think of the Son of God, who in His exaltation had attained to the inheritance of divine glory, as orig-

inally not belonging to mankind. In his later Epistles Paul reaches the same conclusion on the basis of the religious consideration of the original plan of redemption formed by Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. iii. 9, 11), in so far as He in whom the believers were elected before the beginning of time and had been blessed with all kinds of spiritual blessings (Eph. i. 3-4), must Himself have possessed a pre-existing existence, which could be thought only as an existence in a divine form (Phil. ii. 6), i. e., in divine glory.

The same conclusion from His exaltation to divine glory and majesty to an original divine creature in the case of Him who, in contradistinction to other messengers of God in the past, is called the Son of God pure and simple, is found in Heb. i. 1 sqq. In this passage for the first time the attempt is made to describe the existence of such a being equal with God without any damage to the doctrine of monotheism. The brightness that has emanated from the divine glory has, as it were, concentrated itself in a second equally glorious being of light, so that, as it were, we see the former only in Him who is the reflection of the original light and in whom the divine being has received its full expression. Only in this way does the author of this Epistle, who thinks after the manner of the scribes, use this name of Son, which the Messiah receives in the Old Testament in a pre-eminent sense (Heb. i. 4) as the first-born among the heavenly sons of God (Heb. i. 6), who is infinitely exalted over all others, as the designation for a superhuman (Heb. v. 8), eternal (Heb. vii. 3), and therefore God-equal being. How little, however, he thought of an eternal generation from God, which is often read into the passage (Heb. ii. 11) is seen by the entirely different way in which Heb. i. 3, the origin of this God-equal being from eternity is depicted.

And especially John, who everywhere bases the origin of the divine sonship of the believers on a generation out of

God, has nowhere applied this idea to Christ as the Son of God. To him had been revealed already during his intercourse with Jesus on earth the unique life of the Lord as one that was eternal and therefore also pre-existed (1 John i. 1-2). In the Apocalypse he describes Christ throughout as God, as the First and the Last, as the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. i. 17; xxii. 13). He, too, searches in the Old Testament for a premonition of this eternal nature and finds this in the creative word of God, who at the same time is the medium of the revelation of God to the prophets. He therefore calls the "Word" that was in the beginning, itself a divine being, in living, personal communion with God (John i. 1). For it is the essence of the word that it makes known the secrets of the heart; and this, according to John, was the specific mission of the Mediator of redemption as promised in the Old Testament. But it is possible in the sense in which the Scriptures understand the term, where it does not imply the transmission of knowledge but a making known by actions, for the Mediator of redemption to reveal the divine essence only if He Himself has this essence. Just as an earthly father bestows upon his only son everything that he has (John i. 14), thus the Father has given His glory to His Son, because He loved Him before the foundation of the world (John xvii. 24). In this very way for John, too, the name of "Son" becomes a designation of the eternal God-equal nature that has appeared in Jesus Christ (1 John v. 20).

Only to this, according to John, could the Old Testament have referred, when it promises the Anointed One, who was to bring about the perfect revelation of God. John considered Messiah and Son of God as purely interchangeable terms (1 John v. 1, 5); and the faith in Jesus as the Christ, which he purposed to arouse through his gospel, he explains by saying, that He is the eternal, God-equal Son of God (John xx. 31).

Only on the basis of this knowledge of the Son it becomes entirely clear why the creation of the world had to be brought about through Him. This cannot naturally mean that God stood in need of one to help Him in His work, but only that the love of God that communicates itself according to its essence, and that impelled Him from eternity to communicate His glory to the Son, also induced Him to create a world, in order to have other spiritual beings participate in His glory and blessedness. Only through the love that has been revealed through the Son, which love constitutes the essence of God, has the world then been created. But we have seen that the continuance of the world that had fallen into sin is dependent on the Son alone, who has made certain its final deliverance; and thus, too, the entire world government of God, the goal of which is the redemption achieved through Christ, can be regarded only as done through Him as a medium. He is the Mediator of the entire preparatory history of redemption as He is the Mediator of the salvation that has appeared in the fulness of time. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Son, who was to be set over the house of the perfected Theocracy, is described as the one who has prepared this house from the beginning (Heb. iii. 3, 6); just as He who is at some future time to be made the heir of all things, from the very beginning must have stood in connection with the world that has been created through Him (Heb. i. 2). According to Paul the Mediator of the full revelation of redemption is also the Mediator of the gracious leadings of Israel, for which reason he describes this Mediator as accompanying the people in the desert in the form of rock gushing out water (1 Cor. x. 4). In John the people that was the property of the Lord is called, in perfect agreement with Heb. iii. 3, the property of the Logos (John i. 11); and the prophets in the theophanies that they received saw the glory of the eternal Mediator of redemption (John xii. 41). As the word of God is given

to the prophets of Israel and is seen by them (Jer. i. 4; Is. ii. 11), thus in John the Logos, which was the light of the world, was from the outset the principle of all revelation, the rays of which spread also over the gentile world (John i. 4, 9). Here it first becomes clear, that these statements concerning the Eternal Being and the pre-existing activity of the Son of God are not empty theosophical speculations. He who was the highest revelation of the self-communicating divine love from eternity, is also the pledge of this, that the creation like the history of redemption is the work of the same love of God that has appeared to us in the Mediator of salvation, Jesus.

3. **The Son of Man and the Incarnation.**—The favorite self-appellation of Jesus was "Son of Man." Naturally it was not His purpose in using this name to emphasise His real human nature, which was not a matter of doubt for His hearers (cf. even Rom. v. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 47; 1 Tim. ii. 15), because He designates Himself not as a Son of man in general, but as the unique one among the sons of man. This can of course not be meant in this sense, that He wanted to declare Himself as the type of mankind, as its realised ideal. This entirely modern idea is not at all found in the statement of Paul declaring Christ to be the Second Adam (Rom. v. 12 sqq.; 1 Cor. xv. 45 sqq.), because like the first Adam He had been of decisive importance for the whole human race. Rather Jesus everywhere presupposes as self-evident on the part of His hearers that they knew wherein this uniqueness consisted. But Israel knew of only one Son of Man, who was to come in order to fulfil the promises of God, and by the side of whom there was to be no second like Him. This is a self-evident conclusion from the fact that Jesus makes use of this name, not when He wants to mention something in reference to His person as such, but when He speaks of the work that has been assigned to Him in connection with

His calling (Mark x. 45; Luke xix. 10), or when He mentions His authority (Matt. ix. 6; xii. 7); or of the proper course for Him to pursue (Matt. viii. 20; xi. 19), or of His impending fate (Mark viii. 31; xiv. 21). The historical conditions of the activity of Jesus bring it with them that He does not designate His unique calling more specifically as the Messianic, and yet His hearers could and should, if they were so inclined, accede to Him a mission which could be none other than the Messianic; and He later, when He began to announce more definitely His Messianic dignity, and with reference to Dan. vii. 13, began to speak of the return of the Son of Man in the clouds of the heavens (Matt. xxiv. 30; Mark xiv. 62), it was not possible to see in this a reference to His heavenly origin, but only to the Messiah who was to be exalted to the God-like dignity in the government of the world. Even after the idea of the original divine essence had been unfolded, this idea was for the first time connected with the name of the Son of God, and in this way the name Son of Man disappeared entirely from apostolic tradition. In Acts vii. 55 we find an allusion to the prediction of the return of Jesus, as Rev. i. 13; xiv. 14 is based on the passage in Daniel.

Only John has from the higher standpoint of his understanding of the person of Christ, probably wherever he cites Jesus as making use of the name Son of Man, referred this name to the uniqueness of His nature, by virtue of which, on account of His heavenly origin (John iii. 13) the fact that Jesus was man was not His first and original condition; although also in the case of John in many places there are reminiscences of the original meaning of this name. This idea that is peculiar to him, originated even without the use of this name, as a matter of course when he thought of the original existence of Christ in divine glory. Only that His sending was not, as in the case of the prophets, the assignment of a special calling to a human

being, but rather His transfer from the condition of His heavenly life into the condition of the terrestrial and human, that was not adequate to His original being, as we learned from Gal. iv. 4 and Rom. viii. 3. He had descended from heaven to which he at last again ascended (Eph. iv. 10; John xvi. 28) for the purpose of carrying out the divine plan of redemption (John vi. 38). He had come from heaven upon the earth (Heb. x. 5) as He will come again (Heb. i. 6). He had come in the similitude of man and in all His actions had appeared as a man (Phil. ii. 7). He, like all the children of men, partook of flesh and blood (Heb. ii. 14) because he had a body of flesh (Col. i. 22). Jesus, who is identical with the heavenly Christ, or Son of God, had appeared in the flesh as a factor of history (1 John iv. 2); the eternal God-equal being, which John calls the Logos, had in time become flesh, i. e., had become a being of flesh (John i. 14). For this very reason He had been born of a woman (Gal. iv. 4), had a common origin with all the children of Abraham (Heb. ii. 11), and is according to the flesh from the seed of David, i. e., from his descendants and from the fathers (Rom. i. 3; ix. 5).

Further the gospels tell us that He was not begotten by a man, but by the Holy Ghost (Matt. i. 18), i. e., by a creative act of God, according to which Luke thoughtfully interprets the name Son of God, the original meaning of which He no doubt well knew. It is a perfectly groundless claim that this idea was first originated to explain the superhuman nature of Jesus, since neither in the gospels nor in the epistles is this doctrine based anywhere on this miraculous generation. Not even Paul, who traces back the sinfulness of man to the descent from Adam, and accordingly might have thought of making an exception in the case of Jesus, stood in need of this idea. As little as it is found in Gal. iv. 4, so little is it on the other hand, inconsistent with Rom. i. 3. Above all the idea that John in

his account of the incarnation of the Logos (John i. 14) purposes to explain this superhuman nature of Jesus in a different and higher sense, is manifestly erroneous, since this doctrine says nothing of the way in which this incarnation, in which the Logos became manifest, came about. Just because the New Testament nowhere stands in need of a supernatural generation of Jesus in order to explain His originally God-equal nature, it becomes clear, that the narrative thereof is not a mere postulate of religious ideas and therefore must stand on an historical basis. But for the same reason it is not permissible to put upon the miraculous conception of Christ the stamp of a dogma, without the acceptance of which faith in the eternal divinity of Jesus would be an impossibility. It is useless to maintain that only in this way the incarnation of the eternal God-equal Son of God can be consistently explained. He who does not regard the essence of revelation to consist in the communication of knowledge otherwise inaccessible to man's understanding, will be satisfied to understand this miracle of the incarnation, as little, whether this being of flesh in which the eternal Son of God manifested Himself on earth (1 John iii. 5, 8) was created in a supernatural or in a natural manner, and will leave it to historical criticism to settle this problem, which, however, must go to work in a more unprejudiced way than has been generally done in the past.

The apostolic writings nowhere feel the need of explaining to the understanding the fact that He who possessed the divine glory from eternity (John xvii. 24) at the end of His life asked for its return (John xvii. 5) and accordingly did not possess it upon earth. The apostolic preaching that possessed its knowledge by revelation evidently did not regard this fact as so strange a thing as it appears to the speculative dogmaticians, since the attributes of the supermundane glory of God did not affect His real nature as

revealed in Christ; since an entrance of the eternal and unchangeable God into the development of history, as this was demanded by its conception of the world-government by God, necessarily always brought with it a self-limitation of God; since the fact of the self-emptying was only the highest proof of that love which constitutes the very nature of God. The apostolic proclamation merely contemplates with reverence this fact, that the original God-equal Son through His birth on earth was made lower than the angels, and is not ashamed to call those men His brethren for whose redemption He has become their equal (Heb. ii. 9; xi. 12, 17); and the Apostles glorify the evidence of the grace of Christ, who has exchanged the treasure of His heavenly glory for the poverty of this earth, in order thereby to lead us to glory (2 Cor. viii. 9); and they point as to a model to this humble proof of love on the part of Him, who although He did exist in divine form of life, did not want to seize for Himself as robbery the adoration that was due to His station, but rather emptied Himself of that divine glory and took upon Himself the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 5 sqq.). Not to speculate or to make intelligible to reason that which by the very nature of the case cannot be understood, has been revealed to us the highest divine love in the fact of the incarnation of the Son, but rather that we should thankfully revere it and imitate Him who has so deeply humiliated and emptied Himself for us. This is the purpose of the religion of the New Testament.

4. **The True Human Nature of Jesus.**—How thoroughly in earnest the New Testament is when it speaks of the humanity of Christ appears from the very first pages of the gospel, when it tells us that His spiritual and His bodily life developed in a natural way (Luke ii. 41, 52). Like every creature of flesh He had a soul (John xii. 27), and as in every man this is the bearer of the spirit, of which accordingly the same thing is said as of the soul

(John xiii. 21; cf. xi. 33), and which in death departs from the body (Matt. xxvii. 50). Jesus feels the wants of a human being. He is hungry and He thirsts (Mark xi. 12; John iv. 7); He is acquainted with the feelings of pleasure (Luke xv. 21; John xv. 11), and of sadness (John xi. 35; cf. Heb. v. 7); and of anxiety (Luke xii. 50; Mark xiv. 33; John xii. 27), and of peace of soul (John xiv. 27); the sensation of love (John xi. 5; Mark x. 21) and of anger (Mark iii. 5); of pity (Mark vi. 34) and of indignation (John xi. 33, 38). Above all the Scriptures make prominent His capacity to suffer, which was the condition of His redemptive work (Heb. ii. 18), and attributes His death to the natural weakness of the carnal nature (2 Cor. xiii. 4). As the One who has become flesh He stands in no other relation to God than any human being. He calls Him His God (John xx. 17) and honors Him as one greater than Himself (John xi. 28) and prays to Him and trusts Him (Heb. ii. 13).

As His religious relation to God was a truly human one, so was also His moral relation to the divine will. The form of a servant that He had taken upon Himself (Phil. ii. 7) consisted in this that He was put under a law (Gal. iv. 4); that the will of God, which was indeed in His original form of existence, and by that very fact also His own, now appears to Him in the form of a command (John viii. 55; xv. 10), which He is to fulfil and over against which He feels that He could have a different will. This fulfilment is, as in the case of every man, His moral obligation, which He can only fulfil when He discards all selfish activity (John v. 30; vi. 38), and does not seek His own honor (John vii. 18; viii. 49-50). Therefore He must, like every human being, learn to obey (Heb. 5-8), and by such obedience constantly again earn the Father's love (John x. 17-18; xv. 10; cf. viii. 29). He must through the progressive fulfilment of His life's mission *become* good, since it is only God who *is* good (Mark x. 18). This makes possible His tempta-

tion. He too must overcome the desire to acquire those goods that advance human life as also to thwart those evils that hinder it, if this is the desire of the will of God. This desire is in itself not sinful. It becomes such only when man's will rises against the consciousness of the divine will that demands self denial of him. Jesus was tempted in the beginning of His career (Matt. iv. 1-sqq.); these temptations were constantly being renewed during His life (Luke iv. 13; xx. 28); He was tempted like as we (Heb. ii. 18; iv. 15).

Nowhere do the gospels assign to Him a higher knowledge that goes beyond the limitations of His times and surroundings. He reads the Scriptures as the people of His age did; He considers the ex. Psalm, on the basis of its superscription, which is acknowledged to be of a late date, as the product of David (Matt. vii. 36); the whole law, including Deuteronomy, He ascribes to Moses (Mark i. 44; vii. 10; x. 3); the book of Jonah He does not regard as didactic poem, but as a history (Matt. xii. 40). He interprets the predictions of the prophets entirely after the manner of His age, without any reference to the historical conditions amid which they were spoken, as directly Messianic and finds in individual persons of Old Testament history types of the times of redemption that appeared with Him. Entirely naively the Evangelists relate that He inquired about this or that matter (Mark v. 30; vi. 38; John xi. 34), and that He happened to make a mistake (Mark xi. 13). He, too, had received the necessary equipment for His calling through His being anointed by the Holy Ghost in His baptism (Acts x. 38) concerning which even the oldest tradition speaks (Matt. iii. 16). It is the spirit of the gifts of grace, through which God in other cases also equips His servants for His service. The Messiah had the same God through whom the prophets spoke of Him (1 Pet. i. 11). It is true that the evangelists ascribe to Him the ability to know the hearts (Matt. xii. 25; John ii. 25),

but this is expected of every prophet (Luke ii. 39); and from such an example of superhuman knowledge the Samaritan woman recognises the fact that He is a prophet (John iv. 18-19). The prophetic knowledge that He shows in His predictions He Himself declares not to be unlimited (Mark xiii. 32). Nothing is more certain than that the gospels do not ascribe to Him perfect omniscience during His career on earth.

Just as little are His miracles signs of a divine omnipotence that He possessed. Moses and the Prophets according to the Old Testament account also performed miracles. The book of Acts narrates many miracles which were performed by the Apostles. Paul speaks of the gift of performing miracles (1 Cor. xii. 9-10) and appeals to such evidence of his apostolic mission (2 Cor. xii. 12). Jesus Himself ascribes His driving out of devils to that Spirit (Matt. xii. 28) which He had received in baptism, as Luke does in the case of his miracles of healing (Luke v. 17). If the idea is already found in the gospels that certain miraculous powers in the manner of magic emanated from His person (Mark v. 30), it does not appear that the oldest tradition in which this occurs, furnishes any proof at all for this (Matt. ix. 20 sqq.). Peter ascribes the miracles He performed to the fact that God was with Him (Acts x. 38). Whether it was thought that this divine aid was transmitted through the Spirit of God, or, as was the case with Jesus Himself (John i. 52) through the angel of God, who ascended and descended to bring to Him divine miraculous power, is practically the same. It is always the Father who assigns the miracles to Him to do (John v. 36), and who accordingly performs them Himself (John xiv. 10; cf. Mark v. 19), and whose glory is seen in them (John xi. 40) and is glorified by them (Matt. xv. 31; Luke ix. 43). With prayer and thanksgiving Jesus looks up to Him before He performs a miracle (Mark vii. 34; Matt. xiv. 19); and at the tomb of Lazarus He thanks the

Father who has heard Him (John xi, 41-42). Nor does His divine nature protect Him against the attacks of His enemies, but he is protected by the assistance of the Father (John viii. 29) who could send Him His legion of angels if He desired (Matt. xxvi. 53). It is only a reflection of what falls from the picture of the exalted Christ upon His earthly career, or the transferring of apostolic statements concerning this pre-existing, God-equal nature of the Son upon this career, that has caused all the dogmatical worry that seeks to explain intelligently the union of two natures in the man Jesus. The same John, who teaches that the eternal God-equal Logos entered into the limitations of a being of flesh, which by its nature does not possess the unlimited divine omnipotence and omniscience, is the one who reports Jesus as asking at the end of His earthly career for a restoration of His supermundane glory, and emphasises especially that the works of divine omnipotence and the words of divine omniscience had been given to Him to do and to say, so that the divine glory of the eternal Logos could be seen, which had appeared in the man Jesus (John i. 14; ii. 11).

5. The Uniqueness of the Human Life of Jesus.—So surely as Jesus in His Mission was the most unique among the sons of man, so certainly, too, this uniqueness will show itself in His earthly career. The Baptist already ascribes this to the fact that in His baptism the Spirit had descended upon Jesus (John i. 33); that He had received the Spirit without measure (John iii. 34). He is not the recipient of only spasmodic inspiration, as was the case with the Prophets, when they spoke under the impulse of the Spirit. The Spirit has saturated equally the whole earthly career of Jesus. Paul no longer seems to think farther of the communication of the Spirit to Jesus, but to consider this higher divine element of His being, which is through Him first to be communicated to the believers, as something that from the outset constituted a part of His nature, and

this constitutes the other side of His natural and human nature, i. e., His flesh. For upon this He bases the fact that Christ on the occasion of His resurrection from the dead had been appointed the Son of God with power, i. e., had been exalted to the full divine glory and dominion (Rom. i. 4). This God-equal element of the being of Christ, by virtue of which in His resurrection for the first time the heavenly life form of man had been realised, distinguished Him from all the children of Adam, for which reason He is called the Second Adam (1 Cor. xv. 47). Peter also makes prominent the fact, that as far as that side of His nature is concerned which is spirit, He was again made alive in His resurrection, but that His spirit, after its separation from the body did not descend to Hades, as do the souls of other human beings, but continued to labor among the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 18-19). At the bottom of this is found the idea that Jesus, through this eternal spirit, possessed an imperishable life, in which He, even after He had given His bodily life as a sacrifice for our sins, could yet continue to perform the functions of our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. ix. 14; cf. vii. 16). It is altogether a mistake, when it is so often claimed, that the first form in which the higher idea of Christ had been thought had been that He received the Spirit in His baptism, which in itself is also unthinkable, since this baptism in itself would not have raised Him above the level of the Prophets. Just whenever this uniqueness of His nature that had been transmitted to Him through the Spirit is considered, no further thought of the baptism of Christ is taken; and not the original character of Christ but rather His heavenly exaltation is derived from this baptism.

But that which constitutes the uniqueness of His life upon earth is in general no longer based on the spirit that dwells in Him or was bestowed upon Him. Jesus Himself declares this to consist in the perfect knowledge of God, which none others have save the Son, and which can only be compared

with God's knowledge of the nature of the Son (Matt. xi. 27; cf. John xi. 15). This uniqueness is the life which the Father has given to the Son, to have within Himself (John v. 26); and when John describes this as based on the fact that from the beginning He was with the Father and had seen Him (John vi. 46; viii. 36), this is merely the expression based on his knowledge of the eternal being of the Son of God, for the fact that Jesus did not first acquire this knowledge during His earthly career or receive it through special revelations, but that He possessed it from the beginning and therefore can only be explained on the ground of His heavenly origin. But this complete knowledge of God presupposes that the typical perfection of religious life is given in Him. As according to John there is found in the believer an immediate connection with the seeing of God in Christ, also their being in Christ and in God, and the being of God in them; thus, too, by virtue of that immediate seeing of God the Son is in the Father and the Father in the Son (John xvii. 21). The fact that the two are one (John xvii. 27), i. e., this perfected communion with God, is the guarantee that we are as safe in His hands as in God's (John xi. 28 sqq.); and this is further explained by Jesus (John x. 38) by the statement, that the Father is in Him and He is in the Father. It is hard to understand that the attempt is still made, contrary to the entire connection, to find here a statement about the original relation of Christ's nature to God, since Jesus Himself, in reply to the charge of blasphemy, appeals to a passage in the Psalms, in which even wicked governments, on account of their representative relation, are called "gods," without anybody ever having attempted to find in them anything of a divine nature (John x. 34 sqq.). The same is true of the statement, that he who sees Him also sees the Father (John xiv. 9), which Jesus Himself explains by stating that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him, and as a consequence all of His words are

His Father's words and all His works the Father's works (John xiv. 10). In this the further thought is contained, that He is the most perfect revelation of the Father, not by virtue of any metaphysical communion of natures, but by virtue of that communion with God, in which according to John, religion is made perfect. And when He speaks only that and as the Father directs Him to speak (John xii. 49-50); and when by virtue of His peculiar and unique sonship, which is indeed founded in eternity but which appeared only here upon earth in His historical life and sayings, He can do nothing else than what He sees the Father do and what the Father has shown to Him (John v. 19-20), then we indeed hear God speaking in Him and in all His doings the very will of God is revealed.

But the perfect knowledge of God at all times presupposes also the immediate knowledge of the will of God. Our business it is at all times, in the many vicissitudes of life, to seek first the will of God for all our words and deeds, in order to fulfil this will. Jesus is always conscious of an immediate knowledge of the will of God, who directs all His steps (Luke xiii. 32). As the spirit that He received in His baptism first of all drives Him into the desert (Mark i. 12), we see Him often acting under impulses that are incapable of any psychological explanation, and this not only in John (cf. vii. 8, 10; xi. 6), but also in the older gospels (Mark x. 32; xi. 1). He must wait until His hour has come (John ii. 4); but He knows when it is here. To fulfil the will of the Father, which is always immediately known to Him, is His greatest delight (John iv. 34); He at His very entrance into the world made the fulfilment of the will of God the conscious purpose of His life (Heb. x. 5 sqq.). He accordingly cannot act according to His own will, but according to the Father's will (John v. 19, 30), because out of love to the Father He must fulfil His commands (John xiv. 31). Therefore no one can convince Him of any sin (John viii.

46); in Him there is no sin (1 John iii. 5). As He came out victorious in the first temptation of Satan (Matt. xii. 29), thus the devil can do Him no harm, because there is no spot in Him where He can be affected (John xiv. 30). His experiences in temptation are only in so far different from ours, as they were never caused by any sin within Him (Heb. iv. 15). He is holy and just, pure and guileless, sinless and unspotted (Acts iii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 22; Heb. vii. 26). When He appeared in our human form, His flesh was not like that of all mere men, ruled by sin, but He came for the purpose of overcoming sin in the very seat of its power (Rom. viii. 3). A knowledge of sin by actual experience He never had (2 Cor. v. 21). Rather in giving Himself up unto death He furnished the highest proofs of His obedience (Rom. v. 19; Phil. ii. 8; cf. John x. 18), and He has thereby become the author of our eternal redemption (Heb. v. 8-9). Just because the Searcher of hearts recognised in Him the one who willingly and gladly at all times obeyed His will, who only thanked Him for the counsels of His salvation, God would also intrust to Him the complete fulfilment of these counsels (Matt. xi. 25 sqq.). Because He knew that Jesus would fulfil them according to His will, therefore He could make Him the organ for finishing His redemptive activity (John v. 20; xiii. 3).

CHAPTER XI

THE LIFE WORK OF JESUS

1. **The Realisation of the Religious Ideal.**—Jesus begins the fulfilment of His mission by placing Himself in the same category with the messengers of God in the past (Mark vi. 4). But all the Prophets down to John had only in a predictive way pointed to the coming salvation. In John Jesus recognised the Elias, whose coming had been predicted (Matt. xi. 13) and thereby the beginning of the fulfilment of prophecy had been made. He accordingly claimed to be the greater one, who was to come after the Baptist (Matt. iii. 11), the prophet who had already been promised by Isaiah, who was to bring good news to the people (Luke iv. 18). This messenger announced that the time of preparation for the advent of the entire promised redemption had been fulfilled and that the Kingdom of God was at hand (Mark. i. 15). Through Him then the joyful message of the final realisation of redemption had been sent to the people (Acts x. 36). The certainty of Jesus in this matter could be based only on the uniqueness of His religious life. If the religious ideal had been realised in Him, then He could be sent only for the purpose of realising it also in His people. Sending Him was the greatest proof of the love of God (John iii. 16), toward which all prophecy had been directed. In this act God revealed Himself as the Finisher of redemption (Matt. xi. 25). The daily miracles of healing performed by Jesus were not only the proofs of His divine mission, but also the guarantee that the promised redemption had actually appeared, in so far as

in these miracles the blessings of God's grace had already been diverted toward the people (Matt. xi. 5). His casting out of devils was the sign that the supremacy of Satan had been overthrown and that the Kingdom of God had come (Matt. xii. 28). John, at a time when it had long ago become evident, that through the fault of the people the external blessings in the national life had never been realised, saw in these miracles the signs or symbols of an enlightening power, that produced and fostered a new spiritual life; but originally they were not only a symbol but the beginning of that redemption which Jesus was to bring to His people and for the present could bring only to those individuals who were waiting for the appearance of the grace of God. Everything that Jesus, according to the reports of John, says concerning the testimony of truth, concerning the enlightenment that goes out from Him, concerning the highest revelation of God in His person, is still only the deepest interpretation of this, that God, by realising in Jesus the religious ideal and thereby bringing about the salvation that comes through Him, reveals Himself to His people in His deepest love and grace. For the very reason that Jesus does not bring theoretical knowledge but the message of redemption, He calls this the water that quenches the thirst for all eternity (John iv. 10, 14; vii. 3), and the food that endures to everlasting life (John vi. 27).

All the Prophets had made the revelation of God's grace that they proclaimed to the people dependent on the repentance of the people, which they sought to bring about through their preaching. The Baptist had also sought to effect a change of heart by the threats of the judgments of divine wrath that was to precede the time of the coming redemption. Jesus announces that God is not waiting on the repentance of the people, but that in the sending of the Messiah He offers them the greatest revelation of His grace. By this the change of heart is to be worked in the people

as also the faith in Him on account of the joyful news of the redemption, that has appeared in Him (Mark i. 15). He who no longer doubts as the Baptist, that Jesus is the expected one, but believes that He is the God-sent bringer of redemption, is already in the Kingdom of God, and therefore, no matter how small or humble He may otherwise be, He is greater than the greatest of those born of women (Matt. xi. 11). In this Kingdom of God the religious ideal of Israel is being realised. At one time they were the people of God, that knew that they had been chosen to be the sons of God, which by no means says in how far the individual could be certain of His fatherly love. It is not correct that Jesus taught that God is the Father of mankind in general. He taught only His disciples, who believed in Him as the Messiah, to appeal to God as their Father (Matt. vi. 9). The highest result of His activity in them was this, that they felt assured of the love of the Father, because they had come to the faith that this love of God had become manifest in Him (John xvi. 27). Now in truth every individual, who through this faith had become a member of the Kingdom of God, could be certain of this fatherly love.

This love showed itself first of all in this, that He forgives all those their sins, who believe in the grace that has appeared in Jesus. Jesus presupposes that an unmeasured debt had been forgiven to each one (Matt. xviii. 24-27). When, therefore, especially the publicans and sinners, come to Him, impelled by the consciousness of guilt He received them in a friendly manner, and shows to them in the Parable of the Prodigal Son that God gladly receives again the penitent sinner (Luke xv. 1-2; 20-24). Indeed He even called them to Himself, since He had come rather for the sake of the sinners than for the sake of the just (Mark ii. 17). He announces to them the forgiveness of their sins (Luke vii. 48). He does not ask of them a sacrifice, as the Old Testament does, not a proof of their change of heart in

certain works; nor does He make them wait for the forgiveness of sins to be effected by His death; on the contrary, He declares to them that the Son of man has come upon earth to forgive sins (Matt. ix. 6), i. e., to announce to them that God has forgiven sins. He teaches His disciples to pray daily for the forgiveness of sins, as much as for their daily bread (Matt. vi. 12). Now they could at all times, being free from their guilt, in childlike trust be sure of the protection and the blessing of their heavenly Father. Not to men in general, who are only the creatures of God, but to His disciples Jesus says, that they can be more sure of the love of God than are the birds of the heavens, which He feeds, and than the flowers of the field, which He clothes; for He calls Him their Heavenly Father (Matt. vi. 26). Because they are the objects of His love they can be so certain of His protection which He extends even to the smallest of His creatures (Matt. x. 29-30). Jesus lived in the constant consciousness of His paternal protection and blessing; and that exalted peace of His soul, that at all times filled Him, He left at His departure to His disciples, in order to relieve them of all anxiety and terror (John xiv. 27). In this way He realised in the circle of His own the ideal of religious life that He exemplified for them in His own life.

The specific way in which this ideal is expressed in life is prayer. Jesus nowhere discusses the necessity of prayer; indeed, He even emphasises the fact that God knows what we need before we pray (Matt. vi. 8). But the believers through the confidence with which they approach God, are prepared for the proper reception of His bounties. For this reason Jesus can no more effectively urge to prayer than by assuring the members of His kingdom that God will certainly hear their prayers (Matt. vii. 7-8). This, however, is presupposed to be a real prayer of faith (Mark xi. 23-24). Christ does not grow weary when help does not come at once (Luke xi. 5-8; xviii. 1-5). Jesus indeed reminds His dis-

ciples of this that the earthly father, too, does not always give his child what it asks; but certainly he does not give it something harmful instead of something useful, but knows at all times to give it something good when it asks (Matt. v. 9-11). According to John also the true prayer to God consists in appealing to Him as the Father and thus alone to pray to Him in truth (on the basis of the truth revealed to Jesus) (John iv. 21, 23). According to John also Jesus has in no wise made the certainty of being heard conditional upon any dogmatical consideration, as is often claimed in the interpretation of the statement that our prayer should be in His name. In all of these cases the matter He has in view is the continuation of His work through the Apostles. Just as He has prayed for and received the entire success of His work from the Father, thus, too, they are to pray in His name, i. e., at His command (Matt. xiv. 13-14; xv. 16), and could be certain of being heard, just as sure as He had been (Matt. xi. 42). Jesus expressly emphasises in Matt. xvi. 26-27, that this praying in His name does not signify that it is to be a prayer for which He acts as a Mediator, but is based on their consciousness of the love of God, of which they can be sure because of their faith. In this way Jesus actually realises in the circle of His disciples that Kingdom of God in which true religion has been perfected. No religion can do more than make a human being the child of God, who can at all times be sure of the love of His heavenly Father.

2. **The Realisation of the Moral Ideal.**—In so far as in the Kingdom of God not only a religious ideal is to be realised but also a moral ideal, i. e., the fulfilment of the divine will (Matt. vi. 10), without which there can be no true worship of God, i. e., no true religion, Jesus must, like every prophet, also declare the will of God. It is true that He recognises in its fullest extent the Old Testament revelation of God's will (Matt. v. 17 sqq.); but

the method of interpretation current in His day among the Pharisees was entirely insufficient, because clinging to the words of certain commandments and prohibitions, it sought to find the fulfilment of the divine will in a system of external observances (v. 20). It is true that Jesus did not understand the statement, that not a tittle of the law should fall (v. 18) in the same literal sense for which He censures them. He who knew the will of God immediately, could even over against the words of the law, which had only been given for the needs of the preparatory Theocracy, explain how the will of God that was contained in the law was to be fulfilled in the perfected Theocracy. He could show that at the bottom of the command not to kill and not to commit adultery was to be found the word of God, which forbids all anger and impure desires. He could show that, while divorce and the oath were permitted in the Old Testament and were only regulated there on account of the hardness of the people's hearts and on account of their unfaithfulness, for this very reason they must fall away in the New Testament. He knew that this alone was in harmony with the perfect will of God, if in the place of quarreling, for which the Old Testament had only the principle of an equivalent retaliation, the suffering and sacrificing love was substituted, that could no longer be confined to the members of the one nation but was to be extended even to the enemy of religion (Matt. v.). He summed up the revelation of God in the law and the prophets together as one whole, in which each single factor was only the outcome of the love to God and to man that He demanded (Matt. xxii. 40).

But it was not only His concern that this will should be fulfilled in single cases, but that this fulfilment and thereby the realisation of the Kingdom of God should become the one supreme object of all the prayers and endeavors on the part of the child of God (Matt. vi. 10, 33). Real conversion consists in this very thing, which He demanded

from the outset, that the seeking for earthly and fleeting possessions should give way to a seeking for the *one* highest possession, the fulfilment of the divine will, as this is completely done in heaven; so that the heart would henceforth be entirely dedicated to Him, since a division of the heart between God and the worship of earthly goods would be impossible (Matt. v. 19 sqq.; 24). The demand for such undivided service of God is followed by all His exhortations to hear and do the word (Matt. vii. 24), to be ready to sacrifice everything for this highest possession, i. e., the Kingdom of God (Matt. xiii. 44 sqq.), to deny oneself and be ready to suffer for His sake (Mark viii. 34-35), to remain in Him and bring forth fruit, by which the discipleship is proved (John xv. 1-8).

But in one respect Jesus differed from all the Prophets, namely in this that He not only declared the will of God but that He also made it possible to fulfil this will. But this He made possible through the message of redemption that He announced, as in this are found the strongest motives for the realisation of the ethical ideal. He who is conscious of being a member of the Kingdom of God that Jesus has brought, can not do otherwise than strive to become like Him. That which is typically realised in His person, says Jesus in John v. 19, in speaking of the essence of the genuine Son in general, is this, that He does only what He sees the Father do. In Matt. v. 45 He also regards it as self-evident, that the sons of God want to become similar to God, and He shows them how this may be brought about. Through that all comprehensive love, which includes even the enemies, it is possible to become perfect (Matt. v. 48). This is the acknowledged purpose of His entire method of interpreting the Old Testament law, that the purpose is now no longer to become holy as God is holy (Lev. xi. 44), but that rather, since God has revealed His fatherly love in its highest perfection, the object should be in this respect to become like

unto Him. In a powerful manner He has illustrated this principle in the Parable of the Wicked Servant, that he who does not exercise in the case of his neighbor that love which he has himself experienced, loses the forgiveness that he has already received (Matt. xviii. 28-34). In the prayer which He taught His disciples, He teaches the principle, that they can ask the Father for His daily forgiveness only under the condition that they in imitation of His forgiving love have shown themselves to be His children (Matt. vi. 12). In the Parable of the Lost Sheep He has illustrated to what extent the seeking love of God should urge them on in order to win back the brother who has erred and thereby lost his redemption (Matt. xviii. 12-16).

But in this respect, too, the admonition of Jesus to fulfil the will of God goes beyond all prophetic admonitions, that He demands nothing more than He has shown as realised in Himself as the Son of God in a unique sense. He not only teaches the observance of the law, but He Himself fulfils it (Matt. v. 17). In His humble service of His disciples He gives them an example of such service (John xiii. 14-15) in which alone His disciples should find that greatness, in which the one should try to excel the other (Mark x. 42-43). This is the new commandment, in which He teaches that the highest commandment of the Old Testament has been fulfilled in accordance with the most perfect will of God, that we should love our neighbor not only as ourselves, but more than ourselves, as He showed this love even to the extent of sacrificing Himself, in order to give an example of such love (John xiii. 14; xv. 12). In His own example of gentleness and humility all who had in vain tried under the burden of the law to fulfil the will of God, can learn to imitate Him, and this is the way that leads to the rejoicing of the soul (Matt. xxviii. 11 sqq.). For there can be found no stronger impulse for the realisation of our ethical ideal than when we see that this ideal can be and has

been realised. But He who has realised it is not one among others who are His equals, but is He who has come to bring us all righteousness, and who accordingly Himself purposes to work this righteousness in us. Therefore he who would strive for this righteousness must love Him more than father and mother (Matt. x. 37); must be prepared for His sake to endure persecution, if the righteousness in the Kingdom of God is to be in His estimation the highest possession (Matt. v. 10-11). But the love for Christ does not consist in feelings, in a weak pleasure in Him. Just as all love is a life for another, so, too, love for Him can show itself only in keeping His commandments (John xiv. 15). This love for Him is enkindled by the very fact that He has first loved them in order to bring them redemption. To preserve this love must necessarily be their strongest endeavor; and man can abide in His love only if he keeps His commandment, as He has kept the commandments of the Father and continued in His love (Matt. xv. 10). Hence the fulfilment of the will of God results as a necessary consequence of following Him. In the Kingdom of God, in which they take part, all will be satisfied with righteousness (Matt. v. 3, 6). In this way He, through His activity, realises in them also the ethical ideal.

3. The Results of the Activity of Jesus.—As is already shown by Matt. i. 21 in His very name, Jesus had come not only to bring to His people the most perfect salvation, but also to deliver them from the destruction to which they had fallen a prey through their sins. The apostolic letters call Him the Redeemer (Phil. iii. 20; Eph. v. 23; Tit. i. 4). He Himself says that He had been sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to seek that which is lost and to deliver it from destruction (Matt. xv. 24; Luke xix. 10). According to John vi. 35, 50-51, He is not only the one who satisfies the religious needs but He also delivers from death and destruction (John vi. 39, 58). But the people can only be delivered if they permit Jesus to implant in

them the Kingdom of God in the sense in which it is the full realisation of the religico-ethical ideal. The motives for this were all contained in an effective way in His activity. All that was necessary was for the people to recognise in Him the promised consummation of redemption and to permit him to realise this glorious aim in the way that He had marked out. In the people of Israel all the conditions for the success of the mission of Jesus were to be found. Through the entire preparatory development the people had been educated for the appearance of their Messiah, and by the law and the Prophets the desire for this religico-ethical ideal and the hope of its realisation had been awakened. The people accordingly had all possible reasons to accept in faith and longingly the message of the Kingdom of God (Matt. xii. 41-42). And in truth there were also found, not only among the pious in Israel, but also among the publicans and sinners, those who, although despised by the others in the nation, had under the accusations of their own consciences learned to look for this redemption, and these were in a condition to receive it and in their case the labors of Jesus attained their purposes.

But we must not forget that this ideal, as it had been marked out by the Prophets, always contained the two elements of the perfection of religion and of earthly blessings in inseparable union. It is not surprising that the great man of the people, feeling keenly the deplorable external condition of the nation in contrast to its high destiny, clung chiefly to this second element, which demanded of the Messiah first of all a realisation of those brilliant prophetic pictures of the future, such as political independence, the restoration of the kingdom of David and of all the earthly blessings that had been promised in connection with this. But Jesus demanded and had to demand that they first of all realise within themselves the Kingdom of God through the religious and ethical regeneration of the people at large.

He declined to have anything to do with political affairs and left it to God when and in what form He would also fulfil the promises of earthly blessings made to the people, after these had realised the ideal of their religion. Here it was where the people and Jesus separated. Through the carnal-mindedness of the people, which is one of the fundamental forms of sin, through the worldly spirit and the desire for earthly blessings, concerning which the people were always and expressly warned by Jesus (cf. Luke xii. 15; Matt. xxii. 5), the newly awakened Messianic hopes necessarily degenerated into fanatical visions of a Messianic reign (cf. John vi. 15), while the people listened with deaf ears to His proclamation of redemption (Matt. xi. 20-24; xii. 41-42). When Jesus refuses to yield to their desires, the people still do not give up hope that later on He would become more pliable; but when in the question concerning the tribute money the Jewish revolutionary ideas were distinctly rejected (Mark xii. 13-17) the former enthusiasm for Him necessarily was converted into the most bitter hostility for having dashed their fondest expectations to the ground.

In the same way it was natural for the preparatory Theocracy that the highest ideal of Israel should find representatives in Pharisaism and in its legal ideal in the ruling priesthood. And again it was the other fundamental form of sin, selfishness, which caused these representatives of divine order to abuse their position in the nation for the satisfaction of their own ambition and honor. These, being those that could see, had the best reasons for recognising in Jesus the one He really was (John iv. 41), but were from the very outset forced by their own position to assume the attitude of deadly hostility to Him, who, without consulting them and indeed in opposition to them sought to gain control of the people and to realise their ideal in His own manner (John v. 18, 44; Mark iii. 6). Jesus had drawn the attention of the people to the fact that the powerful men

in the nation had at all times persecuted and killed the prophets of God (Matt. v. 12, 23, 37); and that His experience would not be different (Matt. xxi. 33-39; xxii. 6-7; Luke xiii. 33; xix. 14, 27). Naturally as long as the people clung to Him enthusiastically, the leaders could not venture to undertake anything against Him; but when the former in disappointment turned away from Jesus and returned to their old leaders, then it became an easy matter to excite the populace against Him and to insist that He be put to death (Mark xv. 13-14). Not the weak Procurator, who without understanding what he was doing, out of fear of men sacrificed the Innocent One (John xix. 15-16); but the hierarchy in Israel was guilty of the death of Jesus (John xix. 11; cf. Mark xv. 10). But because they could carry out their plans to slay Him only if they misled the people to demand His death, Peter accuses the whole nation of the murder of Jesus (Acts ii. 23; iii. 13 sqq.).

In this way the death of Jesus becomes an historical necessity. Everything that Jesus did to establish the Kingdom of God in Israel had not in the end led to their deliverance, but only to this, that they had loaded upon themselves the greatest possible guilt, the murder of the Messiah, and that by this act they became irredeemably doomed to destruction. But this historic tragedy, in which both the people and their leaders under the circumstances and by the force of necessity became involved, which action could not otherwise than bring destruction upon them, had a typical significance for all mankind. If the people of Israel, which like none other, was prepared for the coming of the Messiah, instead of permitting Him to effect in them what He intended to, rejected and slew Him, what other nations of the world would have treated Him differently? Where has there ever been a hierarchy and where will there be one, which voluntarily gives way to something that is greater? The outcome of the history of Jesus was not accidental. The highest revelation of

the grace of God, which had been given to the world in His Messiah, could have in sinful mankind no other outcome than that which it had in Israel.

4. **Jesus' Prediction of His Death.**—It is purely an historical question how early Jesus foresaw this outcome of His career. Since He in His earthly career did not possess divine omniscience but only a prophetic knowledge, the future could reveal itself to Him only in this degree as the results of His activity among the people and their leaders made this outcome inevitable. It is historically simply unthinkable that He clearly foresaw His death from the very beginning of His career. All pleasure and the energy in His work would have been undermined if He had known from the very outset that His work would have been in vain and would end only in His violent death. In the same way, however, it lies in the very nature of the case, that later on when the death of Jesus had actually taken place, the attempt was made to find references to it at an early stage and with increasing clearness in the Parables of Jesus, which, however, were not originally contained therein (cf. Mark ii. 20; John ii. 21-22; iii. 14-15; vi. 51-56). It is historically certain, that only after the first keen disappointment of the people on the occasion of the feeding of the thousands (John vi. 15), and the refusal of that sign which was demanded as a pledge of the final fulfilment of the national hopes (John vi. 30-31; Matt. xii. 39; Mark xiii. 12) the great mass of the disciples gave up their faith in His Messianic character (John vi. 66). He was indeed yet considered as one who was preparing the way for the Messiah, but no longer as the Messiah (Mark viii. 28). It was only at this point that we are first informed that Jesus spoke definitely and unmistakably of the necessity of His death (Mark xiii. 31-32). He speaks not only of terrible agony and suffering, which He expected to meet in His further work (Luke xii. 50; Mark x. 39), but also of His

rejection by the generation of His day (Luke xvii. 25); of His condemnation by the heads of the people and His betrayal into the hands of the gentile authorities, without whose consent no capital punishment could be inflicted (Mark xvii. 33; cf. John xviii. 32) and of His death in Jerusalem (Luke xiii. 33). For this very reason He considers this death as sure soon to come on the occasion of His last passover feast in Jerusalem (Luke xviii. 31 sqq.; John xii. 7).

But this Jesus never had doubted that nothing could befall Him as the Messiah of His people that would not in the end serve the purposes of His calling. The attempt has indeed been made to distinguish between the knowledge of the divine will of fate and the divine will of redemption. But since the object of the divine government of the world is at all times the realisation of the final redemptive purposes of God (chap. viii. 5) there could be nothing in store for Jesus that did not serve the ends of the redemptive purposes of God, as He recognised this divine counsel of redemption as already prophesied in the Old Testament; thus, too, this His intuition must have been foreseen these also (Mark ix. 12; xiv. 21; Matt. xxvi. 54). We have no further information as to where and how Jesus found in the Old Testament predictions concerning His death; probably He thought especially of such passages as Is. liii. (cf. Luke xxii. 37) or of the Psalms, that treat of the sufferings of the just (cf. John xiii. 18). It is generally thought that for this reason Jesus, who lived in Old Testament prophecy, must have on the basis thereof from the beginning foreseen His death. But Jesus never read the Old Testament as a book of oracles that predicted all the details of the future. He knew that the fulfilment of all the promises and the threats were made dependent on the conduct of the people. So many of the most brilliant pictures of the future as drawn by the prophetic pencil had been unfulfilled, because the con-

duct of the people had made their fulfilment impossible. And then even as it is, there were no direct prophetic predictions of His rejection by the people or of His violent death. Therefore, the prediction of the sufferings of the Messiah could be found only then when circumstances showed that these were inevitable. It was rather the fate of the Baptist in which He saw the proof that the people would not receive His message and that He would share the same fate (Matt. xvii. 12).

Of course there can be no historical necessity that cannot be made nugatory through divine providence. Even the death of Jesus could have been averted through the change in heart on the part of the people among whom He labored to the end, if God had given this result to His efforts; or this could have been accomplished through circumstances that would have thwarted the plans of the enemies. The history of the trial of Jesus certainly shows that its outcome to the very last hung, as it were, on a thread; but even if humanly speaking there had been no possibility of saving him, the wonderful help of the Father was nevertheless at His command at all times, if God has purposed to deliver Him (Matt. xxvi. 53). To the very last it was God's business if He would regard it as necessary to make use of this extreme means for the salvation of the people, or if He would select other ways of making this possible. In this sense, even in Gethsemane, Jesus yet prayed to have His death averted and still considered this necessary (Matt. xiv. 35-36); and even on the cross He lamented the absence of divine deliverance (Matt. xv. 34). In all things that He says concerning the necessity of His death this possibility yet remains. It was not His business to decide, if this possibility was to be realised, but to submit to the will of God, who was to decide; and it was God who did this (Mark xiv. 36; John xviii. 11). Here it was His duty to furnish the greatest proof of His obedience in that He typically realised

full righteousness. Just as His disciples were to give up their lives for His sake (Mark viii. 35) thus He, too, must be willing to give up His life in the service of the mission for which He had been sent (Mark x. 45). But this service was for the good of His people whom he loved, and in whom He embraced all mankind in His Savior-heart. And when He on account of the hostility of His opponents does not become untrue to His mission but hurled words of thunder against them, that of a necessity cost Him His life, He did nothing but what a good shepherd does, who attacks the wolf at the risk of His life, in order to save the sheep (John x. 11-12). If He has said to His disciples that it is the highest test of love to give up one's life for His friends (John xv. 13) then He, who loved His people, must certainly willingly and gladly submit to the Father's will, if according to His counsel it became necessary to employ this extreme means for the salvation of the people (John xxii. 27). If He had devoted His whole life's work to the salvation of His people and He had not succeeded, He yet had to be ready to give up even His life to attain His object, if God regarded this as necessary.

5. The Death of Jesus as a Divine Redemptive Counsel.—The fact of the matter is that God did not interfere with the historical necessity of the death of Jesus, but permitted events to take their course. From this the apostolic writings, entirely in harmony with Jesus, conclude that in this death a divine counsel of redemption was fulfilled, that Christ had died for the good of mankind (1 Thes. v. 10; 1 Pet. i. 21). It is not something new, which the apostolic teachings have added to the declaration of the redemptive message of Jesus, through which perchance even the original simplicity and beauty of this message had been lost and the dogmatic features of which had only rendered its acceptance by men all the more difficult. Even if in the epistles it sometimes seems as though Jesus had been sent into the world

in order to die (1 John iv. 10); and if in the writings of Paul the death of Jesus actually does appear to be as the one specific means for the deliverance of the world, this view from the Apostles' standpoint is perfectly justifiable. As a matter of fact, the entire life of Christ upon earth did not bring to the people their deliverance, not because it was not sufficient for this, but because the conduct of the people thwarted this purpose. It is also true that the apostolic letters do not especially consider the death of Christ in its importance for His own people but only in its significance for all mankind. But this, too, is sufficiently justified, because if the life's work of Jesus did not save His nation, in which the most favorable conditions for success were present, the success under other circumstances would not have been greater. The opposition which the appearance of divine glory necessarily called forth in a world under the supremacy of sin could elsewhere, and under other still more unfavorable conditions only prove more disastrous for the Holy and the Pure One. If Israel could be saved only by the death of Jesus, then in a higher degree there was no other remedy for the world of sin at large that could deliver them from destruction.

It accordingly is the truth, that an act that took place by historic necessity under circumstances such as prevailed in Israel has through the counsels of God attained the highest significance for the redemption of all mankind and for the realisation of religion. Just because Israel committed a sin by crucifying Christ, to avoid which this people according to its preparatory training had but the greatest motives, this sin assumed the greatest possible proportions, and in this act the sin that ruled in mankind had, as it were, drawn its final conclusion. This very thing was, as we have seen, the peculiar feature of this historic tragedy, that the last result of the activity of Jesus involved Israel in that terrible guilt which under the given circumstances was almost unavoidable.

Religious contemplation can look upon this only in this light, that God, whose purposes of redemption the development of sin also, as these emanate from the psychological conditions of man, must serve, had intentionally permitted sin to reach this extreme growth. Jesus Himself regarded the matter in this light. He regarded the hardness of heart on the part of His people as a divine punishment, which through His activity He was inflicting (Mark iv. 11-12; cf. John xii. 37-40). Those therefore who *would* not hear, must and did through divine necessity get to that stage where they *could* not hear, and this condition then made it impossible for them to be saved. Jesus says of the hierarchy of His times, that because they were the sons of the murderers of the prophets in a moral sense, i. e., were like their ancestors in spirit and thought, and had not separated themselves from the sins of the fathers by honest repentance but only by empty pietistic formalism, that they would and must make full the measure of their sins (Matt. xxiii. 29-32). It was accordingly the counsel and the will of God that sin should develop to this extreme. That sin should thus draw its final consequences was according to His wisdom and grace the last means by which sin was to be overpowered. The greatest crime in which human sin reached its acme and which accordingly seemed to deliver men over to their destruction without any hope of deliverance, was intended, according to God's wonderful counsel, to become the means for the salvation of all mankind. The Scriptures describes this counsel as one that was made in eternity, although its consummation was only possible through the free action of man in time. As the Scriptures in general do not attempt to solve the riddle, as to how the all controlling will of God that in the end directs everything to the purposes of His redemptive work, in the sole interests of which He rules the world, is to be harmonised with the free activity of man, which has been his endowment since the beginning of the world, just so little

do they purpose to solve this riddle. Israel's sin does not cease to be their guilt for this reason that God has made use of the seeming destruction of His work of redemption begun in Christ, as a means to carry out this very plan.

CHAPTER XII

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' DEATH FOR REDEMPTION

1. **The Death of Jesus as an Atonement.**—Jesus Himself explained to His disciples the importance of His death in the words in which He performed for them the memorable consecration of the cup (1 Cor. xi. 25; Mark xiv. 24), and which through the repetition in the Lord's Supper are kept at all times in the memory of the congregation. He compares His blood, which is to be shed in His impending death, to the blood which at the establishment of the Old Covenant was sprinkled over the people (Ex. xxiv. 5 sqq.), in order to cleanse them from their guilt through the blood of an atonement offering (cf. Heb. ix. 19-22), and thus to make possible a covenant union with the Holy God, who as such could not enter into communion with the people that was defiled by sin. He accordingly considers the new relation between God and the people, which He purposed to realise in the Kingdom of God, as a new covenant, as this had already been prophesied (Jer. xxxi. 33-34), which could not be effected, unless the people were purified of their guilt; and He ascribes to His blood an analogous effect to that of the Old Testament atonement offering. Surprise has been expressed that Jesus, who in His earthly career preached to His people the sin-forgiving grace of God without suggesting the necessity of any such guilt removing means, at the end of His life made this

dependent on the effects of His death. The attempt is made by all kinds of exegetical and critical manœuvrings to remove this reference to His death from the words with which the Lord's Supper was instituted, which, however, by their reference to Ex. xxxiv. 5 sqq., are shown to be absolutely authentic. But it is forgotten that the first proclamation of the Kingdom of God by Jesus did not attain its purpose, but that the people rejected this highest revelation of their God, and was just at the point of committing the most grievous sin in its history by the murder of its Messiah. According to the revelation in the Old Testament there could be no means of atonement for such a flagrant rebellion against God and His Anointed (Acts iv. 25 sqq., according to Ps. ii. 1, 2), since every mortal sin deservedly brought with it the punishment of death (Heb. ii. 2; x. 28). If, however, notwithstanding the mission of Jesus was to attain success, then a new means of atonement had to be found, that would render the forgiveness of sin possible (Matt. xxvi. 28); and if God had suffered that the wickedness of His enemies secure its end, because this served the purposes of His redemptive plan, then only His blood, that was shed in His violent death, could be such a means of atonement.

The idea of such an atonement-means was found by Jesus and also by His disciples in the Old Testament, and He could make use of it only in the way in which it was known to Him from that source. Therefore the current juridic idea, which is not in agreement with the Old and the New Testament ways of looking at the matter, appears as incorrect, as though the atonement consists in the infliction of the punishment, only that this punishment is borne not by the guilty but by the innocent, in the Old Testament this being the sacrificial animal. For as in the Old Testament there was no atonement offering for those sins that merited death, the slaying of the sacrificial animal cannot have had the purpose of freeing the one who brought the sacrifice

from the punishment of death. The Old Testament atonement sacrifices were in general intended only for sins of weakness and ignorance (cf. Heb. v. 2; ix. 7). God gave again His grace to His people, who were true to the covenant and in the consciousness of their sins sought His presence and by this act separated themselves from their sins, and offered to Him the blood of animals as a means of rendering satisfaction for their sins (Lev. xvii. 11), i. e., as is already seen by the Old Testament sacrificial term, to cover His eyes, so that He no longer saw their guilt, but graciously forgave them. Jesus wanted His death to be regarded according to this analogy. His chief purpose was not to render an equivalent for the punitive justice of God with His grace, which He brought about in the death of His Son; but by giving His Son unto death, He has revealed His highest love (John iii. 16) and has thereby glorified His name (John xii. 27-28). As it was His grace that arranged for the people of the Old Testament the atonement sacrifice, so that the constantly repeated sins of the covenant people would not disturb their relation to Him, thus His highest revelation of love has decided upon the blood of Jesus as the means that would cover even the most grievous sin of His people and thereby, too, the sins of all mankind, and thus make it possible to forgive them.

Upon this word of Jesus the apostolic proclamation of the significance of the death of Christ for redemption was from the first based. When 1 Pet. i. 2 speaks of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, this is to be understood according to the analogy of the blood with which the people were sprinkled, in the Old Testament at the establishment of the covenant (cf. Heb. xii. 24). The purpose was accordingly the cleansing from sins (Heb. i. 3; 2 Pet. i. 9) that defiled the conscience with the consciousness of guilt (Heb. ix. 14; x. 22; cf. x. 2). Expressly the Epistle to the Hebrews, on the basis of Jer. xxxi. 31 sqq., refers to the fact that in the

Old Testament through the violation of the covenant by the people the old covenant was dissolved and a new one had become necessary in which there would be a forgiveness of sin that would cover all transgressions (Heb. viii. 17). The Mediator of this covenant is Christ (Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15); His blood is the blood of the covenant (Heb. x. 29; xiii. 20); through His sacrifice all sins have been removed (Heb. ix. 29; cf. ix. 27), because He has rendered satisfaction for them (Heb. ii. 17). John tells us that He is the author of the atonement (1 John ii. 2), who has been sent for this purpose (John iv. 11). Therefore His blood cleanses us from all sins (John i. 7, 9), by removing the sins of which we are guilty (John iii. 5). In the blood of the lamb the faithful have washed their garments (Apoc. vii. 14; xxii. 14).

Paul, at least in his earliest letters, no longer refers to the analogy of the Old Testament sacrifice of atonement, which could atone for sin only in a limited degree, while he considers all sins as mortal. But he, too, in Rom. iii. 25-26, proceeds on the basis that God has established in the blood of Christ a means of atonement, but which is not, as was that in the Old Testament, such by divine order in itself as received its power of satisfaction through faith. He does not, however, base this, as has been erroneously maintained, on this that God in the blood of Christ, i. e., through the death of the innocent in the place of the guilty, has shown forth His justice; but in this way, that His justice demanded, either that the sins, which He had hitherto graciously overlooked, shall be punished, or that He must establish a means of atonement; and that in the present time of grace, in which He would prove His grace to the sinner through declaring Him righteous (cf. Rom. iii. 24), He has chosen the latter. Here, as is the case in Heb. x. 26-27, the satisfaction-atonement appears as the opposite of the infliction of a punishment. Without considering this further, Paul says that God had made gift to

men of their transgressions (Col. ii. 13), i. e., has refrained from taking an account of them, by blotting out the handwriting of the law that was against us, in consequence of the death of Jesus (Col. ii. 14); and declares the giving of the Son unto death, exactly as it is done in John iii. 16, as the highest evidence of the love of God toward sinful mankind (Rom. v. 8; viii. 32).

And in fact the idea of satisfaction does not in itself explain sufficiently why just the death of Jesus was necessary. As little as the Old Testament ever reflects upon the question, why God through the blood of the animals permitted His eyes to be covered, so little the New Testament asks, why the blood of Christ has this atonement effect. Even the author of Hebrews, so deeply versed in the Scriptures, who seems to attempt an explanation of this phenomenon, returns again to the thought that the blood of animals could not possibly atone for sins (Heb. x. 4, 11), although God has Himself arranged for these sacrifices in the Old Testament, and proves by this the necessity of a constant repetition of the animal sacrifices (Heb. x. 1 sqq.), which was naturally caused by the fact that new transgressions constantly required new satisfaction. This could be a sufficient reason for the atonement death of Jesus for him, because he from the very outset considered the Old Testament atonement sacrifice only as a shadowy type of the sacrifice of Christ (Heb. x. 1), who has Himself been the perfect sacrifice of God (Heb. ix. 14). For this very reason he preferred to compare this sacrifice with that on the great day of atonement, in which the High Priest Himself made the sacrifice and took the blood thereof into the Holy of Holies as a sign of the completion of the atonement (Heb. ix. 12, 24). He lays the chief stress on this, that Christ is both High Priest and Sacrifice (cf. also John xvii. 19; Apoc. i. 13), and he concludes from this, that His sacrifice can not be repeated and requires no repetition (Heb. ix.

26 sqq.). By this he wishes to show, that it was the voluntary entrance into death on the part of Christ that gave to His sacrifice in the eyes of God its specific virtue, that far surpassed the Old Testament sacrifices and of which the latter were accordingly only types. A similar view we find in Eph. v. 2. But with this the idea of satisfaction is already passed by, as appears also from the combination of two heterogeneous kinds of sacrifices in Eph. v. 2. For nowhere in the Old Testament is the virtue of satisfaction found in the means themselves. The animal sacrifice is an atonement because God has ordered that it should be so; but in this case the sacrifice of Christ is an atonement on account of the perfect and sinless character of the sacrifice itself. As little as the mere fact that the voluntary entrance into death on the part of Christ gave to His sacrifice a special virtue in the eyes of God explains the further fact why God, in consequence of this sacrifice, could regard the sins as atoned for, so certain it is that this idea led to an altogether different conception of the death of Jesus.

2. **The Death of Jesus as a Ransom.**—The word with which Jesus in Mark x. 45 expresses to His disciples the significance of His death states that the giving up of His life was a ransom, which men, even if they possessed the whole world, would not be able to pay themselves, in order to deliver their souls from destruction (Mark viii. 36-37). Here He then is not speaking of the sins of man that prevent God from entering into a covenant relation with man until His eyes have been covered, but of the destruction which man has incurred as a punishment for his sins and which accordingly prevents him from receiving that grace which God purposes to bestow upon him in His kingdom; not of that act of grace on the part of God, when He establishes an atonement in order to cover the sins in His eyes so as to be able to forgive the guilt, but of a ransom that Jesus has paid, which enables God to relieve man of the

state of punishment which God by virtue of His righteousness had to impend over man. But it is arbitrary to put into these words the presupposition that Jesus was thereby paying the punishment which the sinners ought to have paid, by suffering what they should have suffered. This verse does not speak of this subject that He gives up His life for their's which had been forfeited to death, but that He paid in their stead a ransom that was valuable enough in the sight of God to secure the remission of the punishment for sin. As unnatural as it is that according to any norm of righteousness the death of the innocent should take the place of the guilty, so intelligible it is, according to the circumstances from which the idea of a ransom has been taken, that the price, on account of which the creditor would release the debtor, could also be paid by somebody else. In John vi. 51, too, it is not said that Jesus gave His flesh, i. e., His bodily life unto death in order to suffer death in the place of man, but to make life possible for the world that had on account of its sins incurred death. Paul, who in 1 Cor. i. 30 tells us, that Christ is the author of the deliverance by a ransom, takes into consideration the high price at which this purchase has been made (1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; 1 Tim. ii. 6). In consequence of this death, as a punishment for sin, has no more power over us (2 Tim. i. 10); and in Gal. i. 4 the giving up of Christ's life is described as the means whereby He had delivered us from the present wicked earth that has incurred destruction.

In itself the idea of a remission of punishment, which Christ effects through His voluntary death in a manner pleasing to God, is not in harmony with that of an atonement for sins, which God had ordered for the purpose of making it possible to forgive sin. But the state of liability to punishment (Mark iii. 29) from which we are delivered, is in substance identical with the state of guilt in which the sinner finds himself (James ii. 10). The punishment can

only be forgiven if the guilt has been removed, for which reason salvation in Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14, is simply called forgiveness of sin. In Rom. iii. 24-25 the deliverance which the fact of our being declared free from guilt makes possible is based on this, that God has decided that the blood of Christ is the means of atonement. In Heb. ix. 12 the eternally valid redemption, which Christ through His blood had to bring about, is called a deliverance from transgression, which could not have been effected without the blood of an atoning sacrifice (Heb. ix. 15-23). But as little as the idea of a sacrifice explains, how God in the blood of Christ could see an atonement for sins, i. e., could regard them with covered eyes, so little does the idea of a ransom explain, why the voluntary giving up of His own life unto death on the part of Christ could be an achievement on account of which the guilt and punishment of man were remitted. Even if in this matter all the emphasis is put upon the service of Christ, then the acceptance of a ransom is also an act of God's grace, since no principle of justice could force the creditor to accept such a ransom.

It is indeed generally thought that both can be explained on the basis of the Old Testament idea of the carrying of sin. But this has nothing to do with the atonement sacrifice, since it is nowhere said of the sacrificial animal, that it bears the sins of him who sacrifices. Nor could this be said, since, as we have seen, the death of the sacrificial animal can in no way take the place of the death of him who sacrifices. But rather it is said of the second goat, who in the great day of atonement is not slain, but is driven into the desert, that he carries the sins of the people, since it was the purpose of this rite to symbolise, that through the atonement sacrifice the sins of the people have been entirely removed (Lev. xiv. 20-22). But the idea of the carrying of sin has primarily nothing to do with a ransom by which the freedom from punishment is purchased, on the ground

that according to the current view God accepts the death of the innocent as an equivalent for that of the guilty. According to Old Testament usage, which has no special terms for sin, guilt and punishment, because these three are always inseparable, the carrying of sin means the suffering for sin (cf. e. g. Num. xiv. 33). Whether men endure this punishment, i. e., the evil which sin in accordance with the arrangement of God brings with it, because they have been guilty of the sin; or if they must suffer, because, although entirely innocent, on account of the intimate connection with sinners many suffer with them, or even alone — this is not in the expression at all. When the Just Servant of God in Is. liii. bears in silence and patiently the sufferings which He endures because of the sins of the people, it is indeed said, that God, in order to show to the people His pleasure at this kind of suffering, permits it to redound to their salvation; but that this is to be in payment for the sufferings that His justice would demand of the people, is not at all stated. Rather is this idea suggested, that, when the pious suffer under the sins of his people, that God permits the way in which he suffers to redound to the good of the sinful people. Solely to this passage is the reference of the Baptist, made when he designates Jesus as the Lamb of God that bears the sins of the world (John i. 29) without ever mentioning this result; and the Apocalypse does the same in constantly referring to Jesus as the Lamb that was slain. Peter, in a connection in which he repeatedly makes use of the words of Isaiah liii. (1 Pet. ii. 22-23), says that Christ carried our sins upon the cross. Certain it is, that He suffered the death on the cross for our good, since it is said (1 Pet. iii. 18) that Christ as the Just suffered for the unjust. But the Apostle so little thinks of a punishment as payment, that he expressly states as the purpose of this suffering merely this, that He purposed through His (atoning) death to lead to God mankind, that has been freed

from sin. John, too, interprets the word of Caiphas which he regards as prophetic, only to mean this, that Jesus was to die for the good of the people (John xi. 50-51).

When the Epistle to the Hebrews emphasises that fact that Christ on the cross had to taste all the bitterness of death, even to desertion on the part of God (cf. Mark xv. 34), it finds the motive for this not in this, that he thereby wanted to render an equivalent for the bitterness of death that we were to taste, but in this, that it behooved God to raise to perfection the source of our salvation by the highest test of obedience in suffering (Heb. ii. 10; v. 8-9). But when it is said (Heb. ix. 28) that Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many, although, notwithstanding this, as we have seen, the atonement sacrifice had nothing to do with the carrying of sins, yet the connection shows, that the purpose here is to make prominent the fact, that He in His atoning death suffered once and could not suffer again, what the sins of mankind compelled Him to suffer. So little does the Epistle to the Hebrews think of teaching that the death penalty which was inflicted upon Jesus was according to any principle of law to be a substitute for the death, which the sinner was to suffer for his sins, that it on the other hand expressly emphasises the fact that death, which is followed and not preceded by the judgment for sin, is the common fate of man and remains so (Heb. ix. 27). Jesus has delivered us through His atoning death only from the fear of death, in so far as we, because we are freed from sin through Him, need have no more fear of becoming in death the prey of Satan, who through death as a punishment for sins, has delivered us over to destruction (Heb. ii. 14-15).

But as it was generally thought that our deliverance was effected through the death of Christ, it was natural to regard Him, who delivered us from death as the punishment of sin, as a substitute, since this idea is evidently already

found in the background of 1 Pet. iii. 18; Heb. ii. 9. In the most pronounced manner this vicarious significance of the death of Christ, but without any reference to the carrying of sin in Isaiah, is found expressed in Paul. According to his teaching the death of the One counts in God's eye as the death of all, so that because He has died for all, they need no longer die (2 Cor. v. 15). God has made Him to sin for our good, i. e., has treated Him as a sinner, that He might make us righteous, i. e., regard us as righteous, and hence will no longer punish us (2 Cor. v. 21). Christ has become a curse for us, by becoming the punishment of those that were cursed of God, in order to buy us free from the curse of the law (Gal. iii. 10). But when this statement is made to mean, that the curse which the law threatened to the transgressor, must be carried out, if not on the guilty, then on the innocent, in order to satisfy the justice of God, it is forgotten, that according to Paul death as the punishment for sin was not first imposed through the law, but already through the sin of Adam, and that the law at any rate knew nothing of such a substitution. Then, too, the connection shows that it is the Apostle's purpose merely to set forth, that the law could do so little for salvation, but that Christ was rather forced to suffer the utmost, in order to deliver those that were under the law from the curse that their transgression of the law had brought upon them. Here as everywhere the extreme development of the substitution idea has no other object than to emphasise the greatness of the purchase price which Christ voluntarily paid to deliver us from our sins. But why this service of His should be so valuable in the sight of God, that He for this reason freed the sinner from all punishment, this the idea of the carrying of sins and of a substitution does not intend to and cannot explain. The dogmatical interpretation of the saving death makes prominent this very thing that it was the death of the Son of

God (in the metaphysical sense) which should serve God as a satisfaction for the punishments of the sins of the world, but the New Testament, in direct contrast to this, makes prominent the human conduct of Christ at His death as that which made it valuable in the sight of God. Jesus Himself says that God loves Him because He gave up His life and because this was the fulfilment of His commandment (John x. 17), as this also appears according to Mark x. 45, as His highest service in the interest of His mission. His innocence and patience in suffering (1 Pet. ii. 22; cf. i. 19), His trust in God, in taking this suffering upon Himself (Heb. xii. 2); His moral perfection in obedience (Heb. vii. 28; cf. v. 8-9; x. 5 sqq.), the highest degree of obedience (Rom. v. 19; Phil. ii. 8) are everywhere made prominent as that which gives its unique value to His death. From the other side it is the love that He has thereby shown to mankind (Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 14; Eph. vi. 25-26; Rev. i. 5) that is emphasised as the basis of it. As the perfect fulfilment of duty in obedience to God and in love to His people, His death is a service which has the greatest value for God; but this does not and cannot explain why God accepted this service as a ransom, on account of which He freed the sinner from his punishment.

3. **The Death of Jesus as Deliverance from the Power of Sin.**—But it is not the purpose of the Scriptures to give an explanation of this kind, for it is not the purpose of the Scriptures to solve dogmatical problems, and the way in which through dogmatical prejudices interpretations are forced upon the Scriptures can only harm their authority. It certainly is evident, that the religious effect of the statement, that God gave His only Son unto death, in order to secure a means of atonement, by which sin could be covered in His eyes, is only weakened when it is claimed that thereby He only effected a necessary compromise of His love and His righteousness and therefore satisfied the necessity of inflict-

ing punishment that was obligatory for Him also. The Scriptures merely declare that this is the great revelation of the love of God, which is able to accomplish what the revelation of His love in the sending of Jesus could not accomplish, to produce the grateful reverence of God, which Paul in Rom. i. 21, has already described as the most elementary expression of all religion, to be awakened in us by the Scriptures. Gratitude toward God, which we owe to Him for being made the objects of salvation and deliverance from the power of Satan, Paul in Col. i. 12 sqq., makes in the end dependent on this, that we have in the Son of His love the redemption that was made possible through the forgiveness of sin. In the same way Rom. viii. 32 shows that in this way the confidence in God is aroused in us, which is the highest proof of religion. "He that spared not His own Son, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

The same is true of the love of Christ which He has exhibited to us when He gave His blood for us as a ransom to buy us free from our punishment. Already in 1 Pet. ii. 24 we are told, that He bore our sins, that we, being delivered from our sins, might live unto righteousness, i. e., that the practical purpose of religion, the fulfilment of the divine will, might be accomplished in us. In the same sense it is said, Tit. ii. 14, that He gave Himself up for our good, in order that He might deliver us from all kinds of iniquity and purify to Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. How this is achieved is seen from 2 Cor. v. 14-15, where it is stated that, when the death of Christ is regarded as a substitution service, by which we are delivered from death as a punishment from sin, then the love of Christ that is therein revealed exercises such a powerful influence upon us, that we *cannot* live any longer unto ourselves but must live unto Him who died and rose again (cf. also Rom. xiv. 9). Living unto oneself, i. e., selfishness, is however the

fundamental form of all sin, and life for Christ or under His rule, since He has never demanded or sought anything else than the fulfilment of the divine will, is the realisation of religion from its practical side. This purpose of the death of Christ can of course be realised only in those, who know Him in His significance for our redemption, as the atonement for our sins and as the ransom money paid for us. Even the most heroic martyr's death cannot in itself have this effect; only the death of Christ could work this, when God ordained this for such a purpose and Christ suffered it for our good.

The New Testament declares that this purpose has been attained in the believers. The believers from Israel know that they have been delivered from their vain conversation which they have inherited from the fathers (1 Pet. i. 18; cf. 2 Pet. ii. 1); they *are* healed from the disease of sin (1 Pet. ii. 24). Through His blood the believers of all nations have been bought to become the property of God (Rev. v. 9; xiv. 3), because in the deed of Christ's love in giving Himself unto death they have been freed from the fetters with which sin has bound them, and have become a Kingdom of God, in which they serve Him alone (Rev. i. 5-6). That this was the result of the ransom paid by Christ, that God through His acceptance thereof, secured for Himself a community as His property (Acts xx. 28). So much is presupposed by Paul, that he, in 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23, at once draws the conclusion that they henceforth shall glorify Him with their whole bodily life and can no longer be the servants of men. As Jesus had already emphasised, that the devil, who sought to destroy Him and His work (Luke xxii. 3; John xiii. 2, 27) had now been robbed of his dominion through Him and had been judged (John xii. 31; xvi. 11), thus the Apocalypse, too, sees in Him the victory over Satan (Rev. v. 5); for, since Jesus has shed His blood for the believers, these in turn overpower Satan (Rev. xii. 11).

The relation of the significance of the death of Christ for redemption and its religico-ethical effect is entirely perverted, if the latter is regarded as the condition of the former, and it is thought that God forgives sin as a consequence of what the death of Jesus has worked in man and in so far as something has been effected, and frees from punishment according to the same rule. For as this effect in the nature of the case only makes itself felt gradually, we would then, in the consciousness of our imperfections, never be certain of our regeneration. Indeed, then, the death of Christ would not be what it is according to the teaching of the New Testament, since in itself it would not accrue to our benefit and hence could not be a proof of the love of Christ or of God. Then the forgiveness of sin and the declaration of pardon would not result from the death of Christ, but as the result of our own improvement, which we would earn for ourselves through obedience to the law. But Paul has said, that if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ would have died in vain (Gal. ii. 21). If the death on the cross (Col. ii. 15) is triumph over the powers hostile to God, which are thereby robbed of their might, then the connection with ii. 14 teaches, that this occurs, because man, freed from the guilt of sin, is no longer subject to sin's dominion. The connection with i. 13-14 also shows, that God has delivered us from the might of the Satanic powers and has transplanted us into the Kingdom of His Son, in which we serve Him alone, *because* we have in Him the redemption that is given with the forgiveness of sin. All religious experience teaches, that conscience-stricken man, who fears God only as a judge, cannot even begin a new life, because, only through the consciousness that he has received forgiveness, can he gain courage and joy for such a life.

The highest value then of Jesus' fulfilment of His mission through His death for God lies in this effect. When

Jesus describes His death as necessary for the success of His work, He did so on the presupposition that this death would be able to accomplish what His life had not, namely, the penitent return of His people and the realisation of the Kingdom of God. And when He depicts this as already contemplated in the Old Testament in accordance with the redemptive counsels of God, then He must regard this death as the final means which God applied in order to attain the end He had in view in sending the Messiah. This means could indeed be effective only if His submission to death was only the acme of what the entire mission of His whole life's work had been, namely, a revelation of the love of God. But this it was if it brought to men a salvation that could not have been realised without it. In this sense it can be said, that only in case that God makes the forgiveness of sin dependent on the death of Christ, i. e., regarded it as an atonement that covered all sin; and only in case that on account of this death He remitted to sinners their punishment, i. e., accepted this death as a ransom, on account of which man can no longer be punished, only then could the death of Christ have that effect which it was to accomplish, because only in this way would He be recognised as the highest manifestation of God's love. It is certainly clear, although the Scriptures do not distinctly say it, that the Old Testament sacrificial rite rendered atonement, i. e., covered the sins in the eyes of God, only because he who sacrificed, through bringing the sacrifice as God had directed, recognised his sin as sin and returned to the obedience unto God. In the same way the death of Christ could render satisfaction for sins, i. e., brought it about that they were no longer punishable, because God knew that if this death were recognised as the means for securing deliverance from guilt, that then it would enable the sinner to become penitent and to return. He could on account of this death remit the punishment, because punishment has only the one

purpose, of convincing man of his sin and by experiencing the results of his sins to rid himself of sin. Punishment, however, had lost its purpose if this purpose was already gained in this, that the sinner, when he saw in the remittance of the punishment on account of the death of Christ the highest manifestation of the love of his God, and if thereby it was made possible for him to awaken to a new life. From this it naturally follows, that the death of Christ can have its effect only then, when men regard it as an atonement and as a ransom, i. e., in the case of the believers. Not *because* it has this effect, and in so far as it has this effect, does God for the sake of this death forgive the sins of the believers and remits their punishment; but He does this because only in them this death can have the effect that it was intended to have. Even if this effect in the nature of the case developed only gradually, yet God had in the death of Christ furnished the guarantee, that this effect would take place in the believers, i. e., among men in so far as they at all longed for and accepted His grace.

4. **The Death of Jesus as the Means of Reconciliation.**—It is impossible to emphasise the objectivity of the significance of the death of Christ, i. e., its independence from the effect that this has already achieved in the individual, more strongly than this is done by Paul in Rom. v. 10, who says that while we were yet enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. The entire purpose and connection in which this statement is found shows that the apostle is not thinking here of a change in our attitude toward God, but of a change of His mind toward us; for Paul, in accordance with the parallel of v. 8-9, wishes to show, that God showed His love for us at a time when this exhibition of His love was all the more difficult for Him, because we on account of our sins (v. 8) were regarded and treated by Him as enemies, i. e., had to be antagonised and punished. For this reason He, in v. 11

expressly states, that we had received for nothing the reconciliation, i. e., the change of his attitude toward us. In the same sense it is stated in 2 Cor. v. 18, that God has reconciled Himself to us through Christ. For this reconciliation is expressly explained in v. 19, by the statement that He does not impute to us our transgressions and on this account does not any longer look up or treat us as enemies. God has appointed special messengers whose work it is to announce this reconciliation (v. 18-19); and Paul expressly sums up the contents of this message in the statement, that God treated the Sinless One as though He had sin in order that He might treat us as righteous (v. 21). In Eph. ii. 16 the reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles, which was effected through the one body of Christ upon the cross, to which He was nailed, is expressly explained by the enmity thereby destroyed, that is, by the fact that Christ gave Himself up to the death on the cross as an atonement for their sins. In Col. v. 21, in describing the condition in which man was found before he had been reconciled to Him, in addition to the separation from God, mention is also made of their enmity toward God, but this is expressly explained by this statement, that they were hostile in their minds, and that this showed itself in their evil deeds. But this is done because here the purpose is to state that the object of the reconciliation in His body through His death, which Chap. i. 20, entirely in the sense of Rom. v. is called the making of peace through His blood on the cross, is that the believers shall now be regarded as holy; unspotted and without defect, because here again the author is here thinking of the effects of this death of Christ working reconciliation with God.

Naturally this reconciliation of man with God can accrue to the benefit of those only who permit themselves to be reconciled. Exactly as it is said in 1 Cor. vii. 11 of the woman, who has separated herself from her husband, and

has offended him most grievously thereby, that she shall be reconciled to her husband, i. e., in repentance return to him and beg for his forgiveness, thus this message of reconciliation reads in 2 Cor. v. 20, where it is said that man shall be reconciled to God by penitently seeking His forgiveness and accepting the reconciliation He offers. Just as the forgiveness of sin and the remittance of punishment can in reality be secured only by those who believe in the death of Christ as the revelation of the grace of God, because only these desire this grace, thus, too, the reconciliation that is offered to men can be of benefit only to those who desire to be reconciled with God and accept the death of Christ as a means of reconciliation. To what extent the death of Jesus could produce the change in the mind of God toward the sinner is a subject not explained in the Scriptures, as little as we can explain why He appointed this death as a means of satisfaction for man and accepted it as a ransom. The Scriptures have only this purpose, through the message of this reconciliation to awaken in men the joyful confidence, that notwithstanding their sins they can find a gracious God if they come to Him with the prayer for forgiveness. But this does not exclude the thought, that we follow out further the thought of the Scriptures and seek, on the basis of what the Scriptures otherwise say concerning the death of Christ, as well as from their general teachings, to understand the significance that God assigns to this death.

But here we first of all face the fact that the Scriptures do not consider mankind as a sum of individuals but as an organic whole. For this very reason they do not regard sin as an individual phenomenon, but as a power that has seized upon all mankind ruling and enslaving them, which necessarily brings with it the enmity of God. But there had now appeared in the midst of mankind in Christ one, upon whom the eye of God rested with favor (Matt. iii. 17). God declared this not only at the beginning of His mission,

but also when He was approaching its conclusion (Matt. xvii. 5), and Jesus has actually fulfilled on His part everything that had been commanded Him (John xvii. 4; xix. 30). He has proved this fidelity to His mission amid the greatest temptation, by willingly submitting Himself to the Father and joyfully entering upon the death that the Father had determined for Him (Matt. xiv. 31). He did this in the same love with which God Himself had loved His people, when He sent them the Savior and He proved true to this life in the face of a terrible death. In Him the pleasure of God could again be turned to men, through His incarnation in the flesh, in which sin had hitherto held undisputed sway. God had already condemned the sin to subjection, in so far as Christ, on this very field of its supremacy, had taken up the struggle and had conquered sin (Rom. viii. 3).

Of course it would seem that the very thing which this highest proof of the obedience to God as also of His love toward mankind produced, must convert the good will of God toward men into extreme displeasure. As we have seen, it was the very acme of all sin when Israel rejected and nailed to the cross the very one who was for them the highest revelation of the grace of God. But God had Himself, in accordance with His providence permitted sin to reach this extreme expression, so that sin would thereby become manifest in its real essence, because only in this way it was possible to begin the conquest of sin in mankind. But sin was overpowered because it gave to God the occasion for the manifestation of His greatest revelation of grace in Christ to exhibit an act of love, which must win the hearts of men, in so far as these could be won at all. In the Son of Man, who has given Himself up as a sacrifice, a pledge had been given to God, that man would attain the end for which he was created. At the very extreme development sin had been converted into the means by which it

was itself overpowered. Now God's good pleasure could again rest upon mankind, whom in Christ he already regarded as free from sin and from the supremacy of sin, and who were no longer the objects of His wrath. He could enter into the new covenant with them, in which His Father's love at all times could give and forgive the children who sought Him and His grace, and secured a final perfection for their love to Him, who had loved them unto death, and to Him who had set this death as a means of redemption, notwithstanding all their weaknesses and errors. In this way the cross of Christ had become the means of reconciliation.

5. The Universality of the Redemptive Significance of the Death of Jesus.— True it is that this becomes perfectly clear only when we remember, as is expressly stated in 2 Cor. v. 19, that God in Christ effected the reconciliation of the whole sinful world with Himself, and that in v. 14, His death is considered as an equivalent for the death of all without exception, and not only for the death of the believers. The whole parallel between Adam and Christ (Rom. v. 12-19) is based on the idea that the act of obedience on the part of Christ has in the same way brought righteousness and life for all mankind as Adam's fall brought sin and death. A glance at the connection of Eph. ii. 16 and Col. i. 20 shows, that the peace which God made by the cross of Christ, is intended not for the believers only but for the entire sinful world. According to John ii. 2 Christ is the cause of the atonement of the whole world (cf. John vi. 51); God has looked upon its entire sin in the death of Christ as with closed eyes and has declared them free from guilt and punishment. It is no contradiction of this that in the same way, and indeed more frequently, the thought is emphasised, that the redemptive significance of the death of Christ becomes an actuality only in the congregation of the believers. If God has appointed this death as a means of

atonement and has accepted it as a ransom, on the basis of which He releases mankind from punishment, because He foresaw that the death of Christ would deliver men from the servitude of sin and would realize in them righteousness, *providing* they would recognise in Him the highest revelation of the grace of God and the greatest proof of the love of Christ, then it lies in the nature of the case, that this could become effective only in the case of the believers. Only on the supposition that according to certain juridic principles through the death of Christ satisfaction must be rendered to the justice of God and that the punishment of sins could be remitted to men because this punishment had been inflicted in the case of one among them, it remains inexplicable, how God, after this had taken place, afterwards yet could make the fruits of the death of Jesus dependent on new conditions, namely, the demand of faith. If on the other hand God has offered in the death of Christ a reconciliation with Himself, then this could be realised in fact only in the case of those who seek this reconciliation and accept it in faith. When the criminal rejects the amnesty of his king, he must still submit to punishment; he cannot be helped. The fact remains, that God through the cross of Christ offers to the entire world a universal amnesty and has been reconciled to the world. No one is any more condemned on account of his sins, for the sins of the world have been atoned for. From now on there is left only one mortal sin, namely, the rejection of the grace offered in the gospel or the refusal of the salvation that had already been accepted. This universal significance of the death of Christ is emphasised all the more by the Epistle to the Hebrews, which gives to it retrogressive power (vi. 26). Also the pious of the Old Testament, on account of their sin and guilt, could be delivered only through the sacrificial death of Jesus, and therefore they had to wait for the fulfilment of the promise of redemption until it

would be accomplished (xi. 39-40). Peter regards it as self-evident, that the dead, too, must hear the gospel proclaimed, so that both the dead and the living can be judged in the final judgment (1 Pet. iv. 5-6). And if the deliverance in this judgment was made entirely dependent on the name of Jesus (Acts iv. 12), then, too, it was necessary that this name should be proclaimed to all sinners of the pre-Christion period, so that these, too, could decide for themselves, whether they would accept the proffered redemption or not. It is a mistake to think that Peter, in Acts iii. 19-20, was bringing an entirely new and unheard of announcement to his hearers. In this connection his purpose is only to illustrate the blessed results of the death of Christ (Acts. iii. 17-18), serving not only to bring deliverance from sin to the people of His own times, but also to the dead. Since Jesus in consequence of His death had to descend into Hades (Matt. xii. 40; Luke xxiii. 43; Rom. x. 7), this could serve only the purposes of His redemptive work. In this it is indeed presupposed, that His soul in death when separated from the body, did not enter the shadowy life of Hades, but that His spirit, anointed by the divine spirit and therefore eternal (Heb. ix. 14), continued its activity in the region of the dead. In the spirit He declared to them that gospel that in the body He had preached to men. Peter illustrates the whole scope of this redemptive activity of Christ, by stating that He preached even to those men that were destroyed in the typical judgment of the deluge. How Christ's self-revelation could come to these departed spirits, the author does not say; he has described it as he does the preaching among the living. It was a religious postulate of His faith in the salvation that was found only in Christ, that this must be proclaimed also to those who died before Christ, so that these, too, could decide for or against Him. He presupposes that this idea is also shared by his readers. He thereby gives us the right to the same postulate. All

religious feelings tell us, that if in the future the salvation and condemnation of men are dependent solely on the attitude that they take toward the revelation of grace in the death of Christ, that then those countless hosts who died without having been told of the death of Christ, or at any rate without having it proclaimed in a way that made such a decision really possible, must after their death have an opportunity for doing this. We, too, will not worry about the question, how this can be possible. We cheerfully leave this to the wisdom and the goodness of God; but we can do without this certainty as little as Peter did, if we would trust the testimony of the Scriptures concerning the universal significance of the death of Christ.

We have here not to deal with a few passages of Scriptures that perhaps are capable of different interpretations. The question at stake is the fundamental idea of a Paul, according to whom the gospel is the word of the cross (1 Cor. i. 18). There are indeed many who regard this as a dogmatical invention, which this apostle is claimed to have added to the simple gospel of Jesus. But it is useless to attempt through critical or exegetical means to banish from the gospels the references to the death of Jesus and its redemptive significance. But even if this could be done it would only follow, that this belongs to those things which the disciples were not yet prepared to hear during the earthly career of Jesus. But even without this, the fact is fixed, that the gospel of Jesus, preached in a manner as it never will be preached again and under circumstances that were for its reception the most favourable imaginable, did not gain the victory over the world, which stood opposed to Christ in the people, but rather that this world nailed Him to the cross. Whosoever with the Scriptures believes in a government of the world by God cannot believe that this fact is explained sufficiently on historical and psychological motives. If Jesus was the divinely sent Redeemer, and if

His career ended with His death, then this death must have been intended for the salvation of mankind, and the place of this death in the gospel, as it has been preached since the days of the apostles, cannot be shaken. It is a fact that *this* gospel of the cross has overcome the world, and this was not done by the declaration of the paternal love of the Father or of the duty of love to the neighbour. Certainly the pious Christian can repeat the Lord's prayer, without thinking in connection with the fifth petition of the forgiveness of sins through the death of Jesus, and he can love his neighbour without remembering that this is a duty enjoined on him by the death of Jesus. But this is based on the fact, that he already belongs to the congregation that has been won through the blood of the Son (Acts xx. 28) and by Christ through for self-sacrifice (Tit. ii. 14).

In this congregation has been realised what Jesus in His day sought to attain through His mission and His message. Here the Kingdom of God is realised, which He wanted to establish in Israel, because here the children of God are so sure of the forgiving love of their heavenly Father as they are of His giving love, and they cannot do otherwise than be like unto Him, who permits His sun to shine over the good and the bad. But the fact that such a congregation exists on earth notwithstanding the wonderful power of the sins of mankind, which had at one time prevented the establishment of this kingdom in Israel, is according to the Scriptures, owing to the death of Jesus, who has broken the fetters of the power and the guilt of sin. Therefore this death had to become the central theme of apostolic preaching and this must continue to be the case in the religion of the New Testament.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EXALTATION OF JESUS AND THE SPIRIT

1. **Resurrection and Ascension.**—As soon as Jesus foresaw that His earthly career would reach a premature end in a violent death, He necessarily had to be sure of His resurrection (cf. Matt. xii. 40; Mark viii. 31; John x. 17), since He could not without this certainty maintain the faith in His Messianic calling, which demanded not only the beginning but also the completion of His redemptive work. But by resurrection must be understood, according to His express statement in Mark xii. 25, and together with this passage according to the whole New Testament, not a return to earthly life, as the Pharisees hoped, but a resurrection to a heavenly life. In this sense the risen Lord declares, that the end of His sufferings through death is at the same time the beginning of His entrance into His glory (Luke xxiv. 26), and tells His disciples, that He has been exalted to the sovereignty over the world (Matt. xxviii. 17-18). Peter connects the bestowal of the glory upon Christ directly with His resurrection (1 Pet. i. 21), and even calls this very act His glorification (Acts iii. 13; cf. v. 15). In the discourses of Christ in the gospel of John reference is made only to His going to the Father (xxi. 10) where resurrection and ascension are regarded as one (cf. Luke ix. 51). Paul speaks only in Eph. iv. 10 and 1 Tim. iii. 16 of an ascension into heaven and His being received into glory, without having before made any mention of the resurrection; in other places He speaks exclusively and directly of His resurrec-

tion, and in Rom. viii. 34 (cf. 1 Pet. iii. 21-22) declares that the risen Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. On the other hand, the Epistle to the Hebrews everywhere speaks of Christ's entrance into the Holy of Holies (Heb. ix. 24), while only in xiii. 20 mention is made of His being brought from the dead, which made this entrance possible.

But even if the believers in the New Testament also hope in the same way to be awakened on the last day to a heavenly life through the help of the exalted Christ, yet the peculiarity in the case of Jesus consists in this, that He (according to the most original form of His prophecy) expected to be raised again after three days, i. e., in the shortest period possible (Mark viii. 31), and that in accordance with the reports of the first apostles He really was raised on the third day (1 Cor. xv. 4), as His tomb was opened on Easter morning and found empty (Mark xvi. 6; John xx. 6-7). Only in this way can the peculiar significance that is assigned to the resurrection of Christ be understood as an act of God by which God Himself testifies, that Jesus did not die the death of a sinner but the death for the sinner as the Mediator of redemption. In this sense Paul says (1 Cor. xv. 17) that the confidence in His death as a means to cleanse us from sin would be futile, if Christ had not raised; that He has been raised for our justification, which can be attained through faith in His atoning death (Rom. iv. 25; cf. viii. 34). The real source of redemption lies in the death of Jesus, as both our resurrection on the last day into a new life as also to a heavenly life is guaranteed only through the resurrection of Jesus, but is accomplished only through the connection of the believer with the risen Lord. Only His submission unto death is an act of Jesus Himself, while the resurrection was an act of God that Jesus experienced.

It is accordingly undeniable, that the still prevailing idea, according to which Christ's resurrection was only a recall

to earthly life, as this occurred already in the course of the Old Testament history in the case of certain individuals and according to the New Testament was several times brought about by Christ Himself, utterly destroys the unique significance which the entire New Testament attributes to the resurrection of Jesus. It is in fact impossible to understand what purpose this lengthening of His earthly life for a period of forty days should have, since neither the apostolic nor the Pauline tradition has anything more to report of a continuation of Christ's intercourse with His disciples but speaks only of occasional meetings. But these latter show that this idea is incorrect; for as sure as it is a fact that Jesus appeared to His disciples in visible form, spoke to them, showed them the marks of His wounds (John xx. 27), so unmistakably all the reports of these appearances show that He no longer walked upon earth in His carnal body. He does not come and go, but He appears and disappears (Luke xxiv. 15, 31); when the doors are locked He appears in the midst of the disciples (John xx. 19, 26). The idea of a gradual transformation of His body, by which the effort is made to remove the difficulty involved in this conception, is according to 1 Cor. xv. 50, itself a contradiction and impossible, since there is no transition from one to the other kinds of body, the earthly and the heavenly, as these two are in the nature of the case contradictory (xv. 42 sqq.). The Scriptures themselves describe these appearances as miraculous signs (John xx. 30; Acts i. 3), through which Jesus makes His disciples certain of the fact of His bodily resurrection, which necessarily must be in a visible manner, since the heavenly and transformed body in accordance with its very nature cannot be perceived by the senses. When Paul saw Christ in Damascus (1 Cor. ix. 1, referring to the account of his conversion in Acts ix. 1-22) this is to be understood as a visible appearance, as were those to the original apostles, between whom and Himself there was no

difference, although according to the current views Jesus was already at that time ascended to heaven.

For this reason the idea of a special miraculous act by which Jesus ascended to heaven in His body is contrary to the Scriptures. From the day of His resurrection He already belonged to the heavenly life; and Acts i. 9 speaks only of a sign that on the occasion of the last appearance of Jesus was to make His disciples certain of this fact, that the ceasing of His appearances signified the definite close of His earthly career. Just as little as His reappearance in any place is described as taking place in the body, so little can His reception into heaven, which according to the declaration of the angels (Acts i. 10-11) is to take place in the same way, be a reception in His earthly body. Jesus Himself in John xx. 17 gives us the right to count this appearance as yet belonging to His earthly career, in which He was yet in the act of returning to the Father. But as a matter of fact He since the days of resurrection, is the one who is exalted to God, as He clearly states at one of His appearances (Matt. xxviii. 18). Only in this way does His resurrection become a unique miraculous act of God. The flesh of the Messiah has not seen corruption (Acts ii. 31). On the third day His tomb was found opened in a miraculous manner (Matt. xxviii. 2). The spirit that had in death been separated from the body of Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 50; John xix. 30) has in a wonderful way returned to it. The body of Jesus that had thus returned to life, that had taken the soul to itself again and had put aside the linen cloth and the napkin (John xx. 6-7), has by God in a miraculous way been converted into a glorified body (Phil. iii. 21) belonging henceforth to the heavenly life. In the same way, according to Paul, those who will be alive at His return hope to be immediately glorified from the earthly into a heavenly body (1 Cor. xv. 21; 2 Cor. v. 3-4). There is then no need of a special miraculous act by which His earthly body was taken

up into heaven, because Jesus no longer was living in the earthly body but in the heavenly and glorified body. His resurrection is His ascension in the teaching of Jesus as in the entire apostolic preaching.

2. **The Essence of the Exalted Christ.**—If Jesus through His resurrection entered upon the heavenly life, and if He there attained the glory which He originally possessed with the Father (John xvii. 5) then He has been transformed to the supermundane glory of the Father (John vii. 39; xii. 16), which is exalted over all the limitations of terrestrial and human life; for which reason after the resurrection He accepts the worship due to God (John xx. 28). Passages like Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20; John xiv. 23, presupposes for His heavenly life God-equal omnipresence; and with the picture taken from Ps. cx. 1, Jesus describes His future participation and the divine dignity and government of the world (Mark xiv. 62; Matt. xxv. 31). When He returns in the supermundane glory of the Father, then it will be the angels who will accompany Him, His angels (Mark viii. 38; Matt. xxiv. 30-31) whom He sends out to fulfil His commands. His relation to the angels determines His position in the world; He who is above the angels is a God-like being. According to the first apostolic preaching God had made Jesus only through His resurrection and reception of the throne to be the Messiah in the full sense of the word (Acts ii. 36; cf. v. 32-33), since the attribute of God-like dominion essentially belongs to the Messiahship. Only in this way has He become the Son of God in power (Rom. i. 4), because only in this dominion destined for the Chosen One of divine love realised, to which He could not attain while on earth. He sits at the right hand of God (1 Pet. iii. 22; Apoc. iii. 21; Rom. viii. 34; Eph. i. 70; Heb. viii. 1).

In His state of exaltation Christ is already, according to James v. 7-8, the very Lord, in the same sense in which the

name "Lord" is specifically the name of God in the Old Testament, for which reason, too, Old Testament passages that speak of the Lord in this sense are directly applied to Christ (Acts ii. 20-21; 1 Pet. ii. 3; iii. 15-18; 1 Cor. ii. 16; x. 22; Heb. i. 10 sqq.). It is evidently contrary to the context, when on the basis of 1 Cor. viii. 6, a difference is made between God the Father and Jesus Christ as the Lord of the congregation, since in v. 5 gods and lords are evidently synonymous terms, and here the point at issue is merely the opposition to beings which the heathens worship as gods. He is the Lord over all (Acts x. 36; Rom. x. 12; cf. Apoc. i. 5; xvii. 14), to whom God subordinates everything (1 Cor. xv. 27) and to whom together with the throne He has given the whole world as a possession (Heb. i. 2-3; Gal. iii. 16). Especially in the Epistles to the Thessalonians is it difficult to determine, whether the term "Lord" is meant for God or for Christ (cf. also Rom. xiv. 4). He is the Lord of glory (James ii. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 8) to whom the supermundane glory of God belongs. He is divine omnipotence (James ii. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 8); He it is that searches the hearts and the reins (Apoc. ii. 23); the Omniscient One (1 Cor. iv. 5); in Him dwells the fulness of the God-head (Col. ii. 19). He is lauded in the doxologies as is God Himself (2 Pet. iii. 18; Apoc. i. 6; vii. 10; Heb. xiii. 21; 2 Tim. iv. 18). The representatives of the first as well as of the second creation fall down and worship Him (Apoc. v. 8, 14); and that His adoration (2 Cor. xii. 8; cf. 1 Cor. i. 2; Phil. ii. 10) is really divine worship, is seen beyond a doubt from Rom. x. 12 (cf. iii. 5). All the powers of the angels are subject to Him (Apoc. i. 1; xxvii. 16), and they, too, are to worship Him (Heb. i. 6). The One who is exalted, according to Heb. i. 8-9, is addressed as God. It is perfectly useless to refuse to accept what the context plainly shows, namely, that in Rom. ix. 5 He is glorified as the God over all (cf. Tit. ii. 13) and in 1 John ii. 20 He is called the true God.

But in this connection one thing must not be overlooked. The person of whom all of these statements are made is the historical Mediator of redemption as He has appeared in the man Jesus. They do not purpose to say that an eternal divine being after the days of His humiliation simply returned again to its original glory; for such statements also occur where no reference is made to His original glory. God has made Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was sent by God as His representative, to the Lord (Acts ii. 27-36) and has given Him the glory that He Himself possesses (1 Pet. i. 21). Just as the Messianic King does in answer to His petition (Ps. ii. 8-9), He receives the government of the world from His Father (Rev. ii. 27). In those passages, too, where the eternal divinity of the Son is emphasised to the most marked degree, this method of treating the subject is found. On account of His righteousness God has bestowed dominion upon Him (Heb. i. 9); on account of His sufferings and death He has crowned Him with honour and glory (Heb. ii. 9); indeed in order to attain this goal appointed for Him, Jesus has borne patiently the heaviest burdens (Heb. xii. 2). As a recompense for emptying Himself God has raised Him to the highest place and has given Him the name of Lord, which is above all other names (Phil. ii. 6-9). Even in the gospel of St. John, where Jesus is described as having possessed His glory from eternity, He asks for it as a reward for this that during His whole earthly career He has done everything for the glorification of God (John xvii. 4-5; cf. 13, 32). And in reality He does receive more in His exaltation than He ever possessed before. Paul expressly distinguishes between His original state in divine form, which the historical Jesus Christ at one time possessed, and the God-like dignity, which He would not violently appropriate (Phil. ii. 5-6), and which He received when He had given the highest proof of His obedience (Phil. ii. 8), so that henceforth all knees should bend before him, even

those of the dwellers of heaven, the angels, who acknowledge Him as their Lord (Phil. ii. 10-11). This God-like position in the world He did not yet possess in His original state. Jesus Himself sees that with His approaching death the time is coming, when the Son of Man is to be glorified among the nations (John xii. 23), and He is glorified on earth by His disciples (John xiii. 31).

But even in John it is not at all the eternal Son of God who, after He has laid aside His carnal body in death, returns again to His former condition. It is the Son of Man who ascends where He (the eternal Son of God) formerly was (vi. 32). But it is characteristic of the children of men that they are not purely spiritual beings like God, but that they have a body in which the spirit dwells (James vii. 26, 4, 5). The Scriptures do not say that Christ went to God in the spirit, when this was separated from the body, as He went to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 19), but that He arose again, and the Scriptures know of no resurrection separated from the body. It is true that He who arose and was exalted has no body of flesh and blood (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 50) as did the first man that was created from the dust of the earth (1 Cor. xv. 15). The body that He received in the resurrection was one made by this Spirit (1 Cor. xv. 44) in all respects the opposite of the earthly body, that is organised through the human soul life (1 Cor. xv. 32-43). The apostle makes no effort at all to give us an idea of this body; for him it is enough that it is unlike our earthly body not a prison for the soul but a perfect organ of the soul. But the idea of the spirit is everywhere connected in his mind with that of the heavenly glory of light that is considered as dwelling with God (1 Tim. vi. 16), in which God appeared to Abraham (Acts vii. 2), in which He is thought as dwelling over the Cherubim (Rom. ix. 4). This glorious light Paul had seen in the countenance of Christ when He appeared to Him (2 Cor. iv. 6), and in it He saw the reflection

of God (2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15). He accordingly describes the body of the Exalted One as the body of glory (Phil. iii. 21), which had as it were, been made from this supermundane light.

The incarnation of the Son of God is then not to be regarded as a merely transitory state, as a passing episode in the life of the eternal Son of God. The Son of Man, which He became when He appeared on earth, has been exalted to God and has been established in a God-like dignity. If a dogmatical formula is desired, it can be said, that He became the God-man. The New Testament makes no use of this expression; and the prevailing view has made the term difficult to an extreme degree, by transferring this idea into the earthly life of the Son of Man and thus has made the life as it is found in the gospel entirely unintelligible. It really suits to the exalted Christ. But Paul puts the greatest emphasis on this that he who has been exalted to God is and remains a human being. Over against the theosophists of Colossæ, who saw only a spiritual being in their Christ, in which the fullness of the divinity was developed, he emphasises the fact that in the historical Christ and in Him alone dwells the entire fullness of the God-head bodily (Col. ii. 9). This is no theosophical speculation. He is above all anxious that the God-like being that is recognised and worshipped in Christ as the Lord is the historical Christ. The religious importance of this is certainly to be found in the fact that Christ in His heavenly life, too, continues to be what He was in His earthly life, namely, the perfect revelation of God. It certainly is not the case that He was the Revealer of God only during His earthly career, whom His people did not recognise as that which He really was, and to whose complete knowledge even the disciples did not attain except through the Spirit. This earthly life of His was not in vain. Its picture, as given to us by the evangelists, is before us to-day yet in a vivid form; in Him to-day

yet God, whose essence is and continues to be invisible, comes to us in a human way; we hear Him speak to us, we see Him in the highest revelation of His love. Only that now, when He is sitting in God-like glory to the right of God, we know as a certainty that this man Jesus was the perfect image of the Father, in whom now yet we can see God. As the proclamation of the eternal divinity of the Son is the guarantee for this that the salvation that has appeared in Him had been determined upon in eternity and has begun to be realised as early as the creation, thus the exaltation to God is the guarantee for this, that He did not merely once and in a transient way reveal the Father, but that we this day yet in the picture of His earthly career see the complete revelation of God Himself.

3. The Activity of the Exalted Christ.—During His earthly career Jesus already looked forward to the time when He would be relieved of the limitations of His earthly activity through His death (John xii. 24) in order to take up this activity in an amplified form from His exaltation (John xii. 32). This earthly career, in accordance with the development of the history of redemption and the arrangement of God, was limited to Israel (Matt. xv. 24). The exaltation that had been brought about by His death not only made the continuation of His Messianic work possible but did this in an amplified form. His call as the Mediator of redemption applied to all mankind (John xvii. 2) upon whom He could only from this standpoint exert His influence. Naturally He required earthly organs for this purpose on earth, who now should do greater works than He (John ix. 22); should reap where He had sown (John iv. 37-38). But in these He came Himself to bring the message of salvation to all that were far or near (Eph. ii. 16-17; cf. Acts. 26, 23). He had to equip and send them out, to give them directions for the fulfilment of their mission, to strengthen them in this calling and protect them

from dangers. The entire book of the Acts is devoted to the purpose of furnishing the proof that Jesus did this in a signal manner, from the time of the establishment of the congregation in Jerusalem to the time when the gospel was preached in the metropolis of the Roman empire. But above all else He was the Lord of this congregation, whose work it was to secure and strengthen it by inner and outward prosperity. In His gracious presence within the congregation (Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 70; John xiv. 23) the prophetic promise of God was fulfilled, that God at the time of redemption would dwell in the midst of His people (Joel vii. 27). All the grace and all the salvation that Paul wishes his congregation comes from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. i. 7); whatever the apostle wishes for himself in the prosecution of his calling, even in the outward conduct of his life, he asks from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. iii. 11).

It is altogether unnecessary in this connection anxiously to emphasise the fact that God is the real author and Christ the Mediator of the salvation for which we plead, since Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father rules and reigns with Him in the equality of power. But we stand in need of a Mediator. The certainty that God will give us all things that are necessary for our redemption we have received only through Christ, as soon as we recognise in Him the God-sent Mediator of redemption. But this is no theoretical knowledge. In that picture of the historical activity of the Redeemer we to-day yet vividly see before us *how* God achieves our salvation through Him; for He who once sent Christ has Himself exalted Him to His right hand in order to carry out His work through Him. It is accordingly entirely an indifferent matter whether we direct our petitions and our thanksgivings as far as their hearing is concerned to God or to Christ, only that He who was and will continue to be our brother (cf. John xx. 17) always will be humanely

nearer us, to whom we accordingly address ourselves with greater confidence of heart. But the New Testament gives us a perfect right to ascribe what we secure through our petitions as much to Christ as to God. Here the thought that is expressed by Jesus in John x. 28-29, 36 applies exactly, when He says that He and the Father are one. It is accordingly entirely unbiblical to want to separate between the two and to reserve, perhaps, for the Father the participation in the external conduct of life, but for Christ everything that pertains to the development of our spiritual life, since the whole government of the world by God has no other purpose then to bring men to the goal found in the establishment of redemption which the government by Christ as a King is to effect. If God has set Christ at His right hand, i. e., has given Him a part in His government of the world, then the worship of Christ is no curtailment of God's privileges. If all bend the knee before the exalted Christ, this takes place for the glorification of God (Phil. ii. 11), whose eternal council of redemption is thereby fulfilled (cf. Phil. ii. 11; Eph. i. 6, 12, 14) according to which He wills that the Son shall be honoured as is the Father (John v. 23).

For this remains a fact, that the redemptive work which Christ is carrying out from His throne in heaven, is really the work of God, just as He contemplated nothing else in His earthly career in His entire ministry than the fulfilment of the counsel and the will of God. In this way these passages find their explanation that have often caused dogmatical scruples, because they seem to deny that Christ is on an equality with God. Paul says, that as we belong to Christ, thus Christ belongs to God; and as Christ is the head of the man, thus God is the head of Christ (1 Cor. iii. 23; xi. 3). But that it was God who sent His Son into the world; that it was God who placed Him at His right hand in order to carry out and complete the work that had been begun, this yet remains a fact even after He had given

Him a share in the divine glory. The will of the eternal Son of God was by its very nature the same as that of the Father. In His career upon earth He had, however, assumed the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 7), as the Son of Man at all times submitted to the will of God and wanted to do nothing else. But even if He as the Son of Man has been exalted, He nevertheless in His exaltation remains bound by the counsel and the will of God, and it is God's work that He is carrying out. God Himself has transplanted the believers into the kingdom of His Son (Col. i. 12), and the congregation that is established on earth through the work of His Son is called His kingdom (Matt. xiii. 41). He shall reign, until, according to the word of Ps. cx. 1, God has made all the nations His footstool (1 Cor. xv. 25).

Here again it appears from another side how His activity is perfectly identical with that of the Father. As Jesus in His earthly career described all His success as given by God, thus, too, the success of His rule as a King of Heaven, through which He gains what can at all be gained and at least robs of their power all those enemies who cannot be gained and who would hinder Him in His rule (1 Cor. xv. 24), is represented as being given to Him by God. And yet Phil. iii. 21, speaks of a use of power according to which Christ makes all things subject to Himself. Paul has represented it in this manner, that Christ, when this aim has been gained, gives His rule over to God and thereby subjects Himself to Him, so that God could be all in all, i. e., that the absolute rule of God could be inaugurated (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28). But this does not say anything but that the royal rule of Christ, too, in the end must also serve the purposes of the divine plan of redemption, that its consummation is effected through His subjection to the same will of God, that through Christ's exaltation could be begun and be carried out.

How highly significant from a religious point of view

the recognition of this Mediatorship of Christ is, becomes perfectly clear when it is considered from a different point of view in the New Testament. It is by no means only the Melchizedek type that causes the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews constantly to unite the royal activity of Christ with His work as a high priest. As Christ in the heavenly Holy of Holies appears before the countenance of God, in order there to secure the fruit of His atonement sacrifice, the eternal salvation (Heb. ix. 12, 24); in this way the blood of the Mediator of the New Testament covenant ever pleads for us (xii. 24); Christ is Himself the eternal high priest who intercedes for us before God (vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34), the continual Mediator between God and man, because He has given Himself as a ransom for us (1 Tim. ii. 5). According to John also, where Christ tells His disciples that they no longer will need His petitions, when the immediate relationship between them and the Father has been established by Him (xvi. 26-27), the fact still remains, that Christ on the basis of the atonement that He has achieved is our advocate with the Father (1 John ii. 1-2). In this fact only it is said that all that the exalted Christ still does for the completion of the work of redemption is done through the sacrificial death of the man Jesus, and by the acceptance of the same on the part of the Father. It is, however, of the greatest significance that the consciousness of this continue to be constant and vivid; for Christ cannot do the work in us that He would unless we have Him in mind at all times as the one who has given Himself up for us, so that we henceforth may live for Him and serve Him alone. We are to find in the highest revelation of God's love, who has appointed Christ's death as the means for our redemption and reconciliation, the constantly renewed impulse to permit the new religious life to be realized in us, which He purposes to realise. But from the other side, it is also necessary, over against all the vacillations and weaknesses of our

Christian life that His consciousness be strengthened so that in consciousness of what Christ has gained for us through His death, all these vacillations and weaknesses of our new communion and life with Him be not disturbed nor destroyed. This is the significance of the eternal priesthood of Christ.

4. **The Activity of the Holy Ghost.**—Jesus had promised His twelve disciples that the Holy Spirit would be their helper in their defense before the courts, by giving to them the right word to speak (Matt. x. 19-20). But according to John xiv. 15-19 it is God who will send this help to the disciples at the petition of Jesus. In this way in the completion of the revelation of redemption the old promise of God is fulfilled, according to which God would pour out His spirit upon all flesh (Joel iii. 1-2), something that the Baptist already expected from the Messiah (Matt. iii. 11) and which Peter declares fulfilled on the festival of Pentecost (Acts ii. 16 sqq.). In accordance with the predictions of the Old Testament, the New Testament sees the fulfilment of this first of all in the restoration of the gift of prophecy (Acts xix.), and of the seeing of visions (Acts vii. 55), of speaking with tongues (Acts ii. 4; x. 46) and of the power to perform miracles, which the Spirit gives to those who proclaim the gospel, in order to give them authority (Heb. vi. 4). On the basis of the promise of Jesus (John xvi. 13) it is the spirit of prophecy (Apoc. xix.) who speaks in the visions of revelation (Apoc. ii. 7, 11; xiv. 13). But Paul sees already in the manifold gifts (1 Cor. vii. 4), with which the individual members of a congregation are endowed for the edification of the same manifestations of the Spirit, who gives these gifts (1 Cor. xii. 1, 11), whether these be miraculous developments of natural gifts or are of an entirely supernatural character. At all events, they are gifts that serve the purposes of the exalted Christ in the conduct and growth of His congregation (1 Cor. xii. 5) and which

are in reality the workings of God (1 Cor. xii. 6), because He is at all times the author of our redemption and of all the success through which the exalted Christ perfects this redemption. For this reason the spirit imparted by Him is called the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of God (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 3).

But the Old Testament prophecy itself makes the new heart, which in the Messianic period God will give and which will enable men to fulfil the commandments of God (Ezek. xxxvi. 26-27), the work of the Spirit; and Jesus Himself says, that without this spiritual power no new life can be produced in the natural man (John iii. 5-6). This thought has been particularly elaborated by Paul. No one can call Christ the exalted Lord but through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 3), who first works in us the certainty of the salvation secured in Him (Rom. v. 5) and awakens in us the child-like confidence with which we call God our Father (Rom. v. 18). The peace and the joy, which fills the believers in the consciousness of their redemption through Christ, is His work (Gal. v. 22; 1 Thess. i. 6). Above all it is He who in the place of the letter of the law (2 Cor. iii. 6) teaches us to know perfectly the will of God and enables us to fulfil it (Rom. viii. 2, 4). For through Him we receive the inner impulses for such a fulfilment (Rom. viii. 14; Gal. v. 18) as is the case with love (Rom. xv. 30); thus all Christian virtues are the fruits, i. e., the workings of the Spirit in us (Gal. v. 22). But this does not mean that the Holy Spirit in each case works in us the single sentiment or the single determination of the will for our action; but from the constant influences of the Spirit a new spiritual life results, a new Christian knowledge and character building, in which this divine Spirit individualises Himself, so that Paul calls Him *his* Spirit (Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. v. 4; vii. 18). This appears from the fact that Paul at times distinguishes the objective spirit that works within us from His subjective spiritual life (Rom. viii. 16, 26-27). The new spiritual life

also needs new power from above, constant influences from the spirit of God who has produced it.

John, too, states that the entire knowledge of redemption on the part of the believers is the product of the Spirit (1 John ii. 20, 27). In Him the remembrance of the words of Jesus is yet vivid, according to which the Spirit is to remind them of all the things that He said, and beyond this to lead them into all truth (John xiv. 26; xvi. 12-13), and they thus will learn to know Jesus more perfectly in His divine glory (John xvi. 14-15). Only through Him, who has taught us to know Jesus as the revelation of God that has appeared in history (1 John iv. 3), do we know, that it is that God, who in His nature is invisible, whom we see in Christ and who thereby has entered into the most intimate personal life communion with us (John iv. 12-13; cf. iii. 24). This is not a onesided view, opposed to that of Paul, but only the highest development of the latter, since this knowledge is for John the centre of the new Christian life, that controls all activity. This only forms a parallel to what Paul says, that in this same spirit, who is also the spirit of Christ, Christ Himself dwells and works (Rom. viii. 9 sqq.). Paul himself calls the exalted Christ, the Lord, the essence of whom is Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 18); for which reason, he says, in v. 17, that the Lord Himself is the Spirit, because, where He is, His spirit is also and there works. The Spirit is not only the means in His hands or an organ outside of Him, through which He works, but is the Lord, who through His resurrection and ascension has become a life producing spirit (1 Cor. xv. 45; cf. 2 Cor. iii. 6), and Himself works through the power that proceeds from Him as the Mediator of salvation and the surety of their eternal redemption. In the Spirit, which they have received from the Father and who has been poured out upon them, the believers know that He has been exalted to the Father (Acts ii. 33; v. 31-32).

5. The Essence of the Holy Ghost.—Peter states

that the Holy Spirit is a gift that we receive (Acts ii. 38), which conception is also implied in the statement that He is poured out. This gift can be given in a measure (John iii. 34) and be received by them (1 John iv. 13); He comes from God (1 John iv. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 17), who is the real giver of the Spirit (2 Cor. v. 5; 1 John iii. 24). He is the oil with which the Christians are anointed for the service of God (1 John ii. 20, 27). Jesus defines this gift more closely as a power from on high (Luke xxiv. 49), by which, according to Acts i. 8 the power of the Holy Ghost is meant; and Paul in 1 Cor. ii. 5 calls it the power that manifests itself by the effects that He produces (1 Cor. ii. 4; cf. Rom. xv. 13, 19). Through this power, which proceeds from His spirit, God Himself makes His dwelling place in the congregation, so that they are His temple (1 Cor. v. 16).

It is hard to understand how it was ever possible over against these facts, to debate the question, whether the Spirit in the New Testament is considered a personal spirit. When purposely the sending of the Son is put on a parallel with the sending of the Spirit (Gal. iv. 4, 6), then, too, the giving of that power is declared to be as much a divine act as is the other. Just in Luke xxiv. 49, where mention is expressly made of a power from on high, we are told that this power is sent by the Father because He had promised it. Then, too, it is possible to speak of His coming, of His teachings and reminding (Luke xvi. 8-9; xiii. 14, 24), as when such teaching is ascribed to the oil of anointment (1 John ii. 27). When in Rev. i. 4, grace and redemption are ascribed to the seven spirits before the throne of God, just as they are to God and Christ, the use of the plural shows here, that the writer is thinking of the Spirit as He is active in different persons. Only through a perfectly unhermeneutical pressure can passages that speak of a making sad and deceiving of the Spirit (Acts v. 3-4; Eph. iv. 30) be used to demonstrate that the Spirit is considered personal.

In doing this emphasis is laid chiefly on the final discourses found in John, where the Spirit under the name of the Paraclete or Assistant is constantly designated as the substitute of Christ, who is to come only after He Himself is gone (John xiv. 16; 16, 7). In former centuries the Oriental and Occidental Church split on account of the question, whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father or from the Father and the Son and in this connection they thought of an inner process in the Trinity. But these passages do not speak of this at all, but of the significance of the fact of the sending of the Spirit for our redemption. The fact that Christ sends him (John xvi.) from the Father (John xv. 20) is expressly declared in xiv. 16, 26 to mean, that the Father sends him at His request, just as in His earthly career Jesus did merely what He asked of the Father and what the Father did through Him. By this it is only said, that the new stage in the development of salvation, which begins with the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, is equally independent and unique as was that which began with the sending of the Son. It is true that the analogy thus given is carried out to the extent that to the Spirit is also ascribed a hearing, and a reception and a proclaiming as this is done of Christ (John xvii. 13-14), but this does not go beyond a personification, which intent is not a rhetorical form, but is deeply founded on the idea of the uniqueness of the activity of the work of the Spirit. It is merely the same personification that is found when the distribution of the gifts, which in so many words in Cor. xvii. 6, are ascribed to God, are as xii. 11 declared to be the product of the will of the Spirit, who, because God works through Him, naturally realises only the divine will. How little Paul in this connection thinks of a personality of the Spirit, is seen most clearly from 1 Cor. ii. 10 sqq., where on the analogy of the human spirit (in the popular sense), that alone in its consciousness knows the inner man, the manner is illustrated

in which the divine spirit, who also searches the depths of the God-head, when He is bestowed upon men, can alone reveal His most secret counsels. And yet just here the apostle speaks of the searching activity of the Spirit.

In the Trinitarian passages of the Scriptures (1 Pet. i. 2; 1 Cor. xii. 4 sqq.; Eph. iv. 4 sqq.; Tit. iii. 4 sqq.) it is always the activity of the spirit sent by God, that is spoken of, which is co-ordinate to the activity of the Son whom He has sent, as is done in the baptismal confession (Matt. xxviii. 19). These passages are for this reason fundamental, in so far as they show, that the sending of the Spirit is regarded as the necessary close of the revelation of redemption in Christ. The most important of these passages, 2 Cor. xiii. 13, shows, that the writer does not here think of "personality" of the Spirit, since here mention is not made of a communion of the Spirit, but in accordance with a fixed form of expression (cf. Phil. ii. 1; 1 Cor. x. 16) of a taking part in the Holy Spirit, who works in us all that is needed for the salvation that the grace of Christ has prepared for us and the love of God has promised. And the so-called "trinity of revelation," according to which the revelation of the redemption of God in Christ, is only completed through the Spirit, the Scriptures do not teach. This alone is in harmony with the purposes of revelation, which establishes true religious life; for this can not be done by a knowledge of the relationship that is thought to exist between the three persons in the God-head, which can be understood only by the few, but only through this, that the wonderful power with which the revelation of redemption in Christ takes hold of us and works something new in us, is recognized as the Spirit from the living God Himself, who manifests Himself to us in this power. It is, however, manifest that this power can become active in us only when we secure knowledge of this revelation of redemption in the words of the message of salvation.

CHAPTER XIV

WORD AND SACRAMENT

1. **The Word as Means of Grace.**—While He was upon earth Jesus accomplished everything that He worked in His disciples by communicating to them the word of God (John xvii. 14), i. e., by bringing the message, that in Him the highest revelation of God has appeared, which was to bring to the people the promised redemption. This word was the seed by the sowing of which the Kingdom of God was established (Luke viii. 11). It was only necessary for the disciples to keep this word (John xvii. 6); that this word should remain in them (John xv. 7) and develop (John viii. 37); and that they should remain in it (John viii. 31), i. e., should ever anew penetrate into it and in this way experience its effects. This effect could consist only in this, that they learned to recognise in Him the one who had been sent for their redemption and to believe in Him (John xvii. 8). Then they would know that God Himself had come to them in Him and that He loved them with a Father's love (John xvi. 27-28). But this highest revelation of God's love must of itself work a new life in them, by which they became His real children, i. e., became similar to Him (Matt. v. 45) and in that way fulfilled the will of God, as He at all times fulfils it. In this sense we are told in John viii. 31-32, that the truth that is known from His word, which consisted in that highest revelation of God's love, will deliver them from the servitude of sin; that His disciples are clean on account of the word that He has spoken to them, because it delivers them from their old sinful being (John xv. 2).

In this way His word, or the word of God, which He proclaimed, was the specific means of grace, through which He worked in the disciples what He had come to work, namely, the realisation of the religico-ethical ideal, and in this way established the Kingdom of God.

And when Jesus was taken from this earth and had been exalted to heaven, it was necessary that the permanent working of this means of grace should be secured. For this purpose Jesus during His earthly career, selected His twelve disciples, who through their constant associations with Him, were prepared to be sent out (Mark iii. 14) with the message of redemption, which He had preached (Luke x. 9), to bear testimony of Him, in whose company they had been from the beginning (John xv. 27), and whose resurrection and ascension had finished His redemptive work (Acts ii. 32-33). The Apostle Paul, too, who was called after Christ's earthly career was closed, had been sent for the same purpose by the exalted Christ, to declare His joyful message (1 Cor. i. 17). The word which at one time God had sent to His people through Jesus with the glad news of redemption, as Peter had on occasions been commissioned to proclaim it to the Gentiles (Acts x. 38; cf. xv. 7), was through Paul sent particularly to the Gentiles (Acts xxviii. 20). The proclamation of the word was thereby by no means to be confined to the regular apostles, but the preaching was by the fact of the apostles' call, to be fixed. For through them God works in the Gentiles a change of heart (Acts xi. 18) with which the life of redemption begins, as He has worked this in Israel (Acts v. 31).

This word, which in character and effect is in every particular placed on an equality with the word of the Old Testament (1 Pet. i. 25; Rom. x. 8), is like the latter (cf. Heb. iv. 17), a living word, i. e., effective. Like an incorruptible seed it produces and sustains a new life (1 Pet. i. 23), because it announces Christ as the true sustenance

of life (cf. Job vi. 35), so that in this way we can gain salvation (1 Pet. ii. 2-3). Through this word of truth Christians have become what they are, as it were, are begotten again (James i. 18). The will of God as proclaimed by Christ is thereby, in accordance with the promise of Jer. xxxi. 33, written in their hearts, and for this reason this implanted word can save their souls (James i. 21). In John, too, this word is the seed, which, if it abides in man (cf. John xv. 7) begets a new sinless life in God (1 John iii. 9) and works the subjugation of all evil (1 John ii. 14). In the Apocalypse the believers receive the testimonial of Jesus that which He as the faithful witness (i. 5) gives during His lifetime (John viii. 37), as a permanent possession, so so that they thereby are strengthened in their fidelity in faith and willing for His sake even to suffer martyrdom (Rev. vi. 9). In Heb. vi. 5 that beautiful word of God which the believers have tasted is declared to be that which (cf. v. 12; xiii. 7) has made the Christians to be what they are; and it is doubtlessly regarded as an effect of this word, when, on the basis of the prophecy of Jeremiah, the word is said to be written in their hearts (viii. 10; x. 16). Paul calls the gospel as the apostles proclaim it the power of God (Rom. i. 16), in so far as it brings about faith in the message of salvation, or the call through which this faith is produced and the believer is brought into the congregation (1 Thess. ii. 14), in which he participates in all of the blessings of redemption (Eph. iii. 6). Through this gospel Paul begat those who had been converted through him as his children (1 Cor. iv. 15). His word, which the Thessalonians had with all reason accepted as the word of God, continues to work in them by constantly strengthening them in their faith (1 Thess. ii. 13). Accordingly then the apostolic word is also the word of God, which as the specific means of grace works all things that are necessary for salvation.

2. **Word and Spirit.**—This result is produced by the word of God in the first place by reason of its contents, just as the word that Jesus preached exercised its influence through the message of joy that it brought. These contents will be different in the case of the regular preachers of the word according to their different conceptions of the revelation of redemption in Christ. The first apostles thought chiefly of the near return of the Lord and the establishment of His kingdom, the fulfilment of which naturally brings with it the fulfilment of the will of God as revealed in His word and preaching, for which He will come to demand an account. In addition, they proclaimed patience in this hope, without which it is impossible to secure that perfect redemption that He brings with Him. These are the thoughts particularly of the Epistles of James and to the Hebrews. In 2 Pet. i. 4; iii. 14, also the promises given to us by Christ are described as furnishing the strong impetus for the development of Christian virtues. But already in the first Epistle of Peter, it is the powerful example of Christ that the word brings to us (ii. 21; iii. 18), the message of the saving power of His atoning death (i. 18-19; ii. 24), the announcement of His resurrection productive of a vivid hope (i. 3), which makes the word a means of grace. In the case of Paul, for whom the gospel is the word of the cross and of the salvation that was thereby secured, this word does its work essentially through the message of grace that it brings. With a "for" the apostle goes from the presentation of this message of redemption to the admonitions, the fulfilment of which the evidence of God's grace contained in this message must necessarily bring about (Rom. xii. 1). The love shown by Christ in His death had the purpose of renewing our whole life (2 Cor. v. 15; cf. Rom. xiv. 9); again the common Lord and the name worshipped in common (Rom. xiii. 31; 1 Cor. i. 30), are the motives for the exhortation, and the contest

against fornication is directly based on the experience of salvation as the foundation of our Christianity (1 Cor. vi. 17; xix. 20). Especially in John, for whom the entire gospel is contained in this, that in Jesus God has manifested His innermost essence, so that now all is light, i. e., has become perfectly clear so that nothing is any more unknown (1 John i. 5), it is regarded as necessary, as we shall see, that our perfect communion with God must of itself become a powerful beginning of a new life.

When the messengers, who had been sent out to proclaim this message, were equipped by God for this purpose, then this Spirit could not work in a different way from that seen in all to whom He had been promised, namely that He would guide them into all truth (John xvi. 13), i. e., would enable them to understand perfectly the revelation of redemption in Christ and teach them to proclaim it aright (1 Cor. ii. 12-13). As He would remind them of all that Jesus had said, He also furnishes them the surety that nothing was lacking to insure the success of their preaching. On the other hand, the message of redemption, in order that it should attain its ends solely through its God-given contents, dares not through the admixture of human wisdom and oratorical art be emptied of its real power of persuasion (1 Cor. i. 1-2; ii. 11). It is not to be the words of human persuasion (Gal. v. 8), but is to work through the God-given power within it, so that faith can rest unshaken upon such a power and not be overthrown by any human wisdom (1 Cor. ii. 5). But because the Spirit only teaches us to proclaim the gospel in this way, therefore every success that the apostle attains through his preaching is a divinely given gift of grace (Rom. i. 11); the congregation that he establishes is a letter of Christ, written by the Spirit upon the hearts of men, is the writing of which he did a helper's service through the preaching of the gospel (2 Cor. iii. 3). But in the congregation thus established, upon which the

spirit has been poured out, the word of Christ is yet proclaimed richly by believers filled with the Spirit (Col. iii. 16); and then the sword of the Spirit is at all times the word of God (Eph. vi. 17), as it is the Spirit that gives to the believers this word in order to establish it and to confirm it in others. For whenever through the working of the Holy Ghost an independent understanding of the divine revelation of redemption has been matured, and this has produced the new religious life, there streams of living water flow for such a man (John iii. 38-39); and his proclamation of the truth of salvation, coming from a heart filled with the Spirit, is again a word of God, that passes over to others. This appears particularly in mission preaching. The world cannot receive the Spirit (John xiv. 27), and the Holy Spirit cannot influence them immediately. The important office of convincing the world of sin and thus bringing it to faith (John xvi. 8-11) can be filled only by the Spirit, in so far as He speaks through the spiritually powerful members of the congregation, since the apostolic preaching could naturally reach only a small part of the world and yet the gospel was to be preached to all the nations (Mark xiii. 10).

But it is also possible that a spirit which is not of God can find his way into the congregation, and from fear of this the manifestation of a higher spirit in the congregation could be regarded with suspicion. Therefore, Paul felt it necessary to warn against quenching the spirit, not to despise prophesying but to prove all things (1 Thess. v. 19 sqq.). John expressly urges to search the spirits, if they are of God, and tells us that the measure for this is the sum of apostolic proclamation and the willingness to hear it (1 John iv. 1-6). In so far it is necessary to try words of the Spirit at all times by the testimony of eye-witnesses, which Jesus expressly puts side by side with that of the Spirit (John xv. 27). John also in his discussion of the

manner in which the fulfilment of the commandments of faith and of love originate (1 John iii. 23) proceeds from what the Spirit works in us (1 John iii. 24; iv. 13), and then passes over to the testimony of the eye-witnesses (1 John iv. 14-15), which he, in v. 6-8, puts by the side of the testimony of the Spirit and over against erroneous teachings. To-day yet, when we possess the testimony of the eye-witnesses only in the New Testament, this must constitute for us the norm for judgment of everything that claims to be in doctrine or life the product of the Christian spirit.

3. **Baptism.**—The rite of immersion, which as an symbolical act that was performed but a single time was specifically differentiated from the Jewish washings, as the believers from among the Jews were taught in their elementary training, was originally introduced by John the Baptist to represent and to seal the change of heart that was brought about by his preaching of repentance. When in Mark i. 4 the purpose of this rite is stated to be the forgiveness of sins, we find here already a transferring of the effect of the Christian baptism upon the baptism of John, since the Baptist himself describes it in Matt. iii. 11 as an obligation of proving the change of heart that was symbolised by the rite and expressly reserves for the Messianic baptism the bestowal of the spiritual gifts necessary for this. When Christ sends out His disciples to baptise in Judæa (John iv. 2; cf. iii. 22) this is to be regarded simply as a continuation of the baptism of John into repentance. A direct command for the performance of this rite was not given by Christ during His earthly career. Matt. xxviii. 18-19 undeniably expresses the consciousness that it was only the Christ who had been exalted to a participation in the divine government of the world, who had made known to His disciples the command to receive into discipleship all the world. On the basis of the promise given him (Matt. xvi.

18), Peter for the first time recognised this command of his Lord on the day of Pentecost and by the application of this rite separated those who believed in the Messiah from the people at large and organised them into a congregation of believers in the Messiah (Acts ii. 38).

Here, too, the purpose is still primarily to show that this baptism took place in consequence of the change of heart, but on the basis of the name of Jesus (cf. x. 18), i. e., on this that Jesus was designated as the Exalted Lord (viii. 16), for which reason, according to Heb. x. 26-27, for all times the confession of Him as the one who fulfilled the promise of God is connected with baptism. Paul from the very beginning introduced this entrance rite into his congregation, without, as he expressly states, having received a special command to do this (1 Cor. i. 17), and that, as appears from 1 Cor. i. 13, 15, as a baptism in the name of Christ. In Matt. xxviii. 19 also there is no hint of any change in the original baptismal rite; but here this confession is explained to mean that in it the name of God is recognised as that of the Father who has sent His Son and has bestowed the Holy Spirit for the carrying out of His plan of redemption. In so far as baptism was administered when the Christians connected themselves with the congregation, it naturally constitutes the medium for the participation in the salvation that Christ has brought and thereby the deliverance from the destruction to which the world had fallen a prey (Acts. ii. 40; 1 Pet. iii. 21; Tit. iii. 5). But this salvation is given to us through the forgiveness of sin that Christ has won for us through His death, for which reason, according to Acts ii. 38, the attainment of this is primarily the object of baptism. Then it was natural to find in the symbolism of this rite, that it aims at the washing away of the uncleanness that adheres to the flesh and the cleansing of the conscience from the pollution of guilt, which is prayed for and secured in baptism (1 Pet.

iii. 21). In 1 Pet. i. 2, the sprinkling with the atoning blood of Christ is connected with baptism (cf. also Heb. x. 22). Here the fact is expressed that for the members of the apostolic congregation, the sin that has been done away with in the atoning blood of Christ, is no hindrance any longer for the consummation of a covenant with God. Then according to 1 John i. 7, the congregation of those who walk in the light, which is a communion with the Father and the Son (v. 3), brings too the cleansing from the pollution of sin through the blood of Jesus. In Paul is still found an echo of this the oldest conception of the symbolism of baptism, when he calls baptism the washing away of sins (Acts xvii. 16), the cleansing through the washing by the word (Eph. v. 26), which here seems even to be based on the word of Christ's promise, as the state of being washed (1 Cor. vi. 11).

But now Peter connects with baptism also the promise of the bestowal of the Spirit (Acts. ii. 38), for which reason, evidently in harmony with old Christian usage of language, it is also called the consecration to God effected through the Spirit (1 Pet. i. 2; ii. Thess. ii. 13), and John describes the Spirit as the anointing oil necessary for this (1 John ii. 20, 27). In Heb. vi. 2, also the laying on of hands is also connected with baptism, which naturally is only the symbolical representation of the transition of the prayed for gifts of the Spirit upon the one who is baptized (Acts viii. 16). In 1 Cor. xii. 13 Paul directly calls baptism the baptism of the Holy Ghost in which the candidate is filled with the Holy Ghost. And since Paul regards the Spirit as the principle of the entire Christian life, he could again return to the original symbolism in baptism, according to which baptism points to the drowning of the entire old being and the coming forth of a new being, and sees in it the death of the old man (Rom. viii. 2), a washing of regeneration through the Holy Ghost (Tit. iii. 5).

Through this, according to him, the believer is also transferred into the living communion with Christ, in that Paul, grasping the sense of baptism more deeply, sees in it a being immersed into Christ (Rom. iv. 3) and even a putting on of Christ (Gal. iii. 27). In consequence of this the Christian in baptism figuratively goes through the two stages of the life of his Savior (Rom. vi. 5); he dies with Him according to the old being (Rom. vi. 6; Col. ii. 20) and arises with Him to a new life (Eph. ii. 5, 6; Col. ii. 12-13; cf. Rom. vi. 8). The fact that with the act of baptism the bestowal of the Holy Ghost as the second of the specific gifts of the congregation is connected, becomes all the more certain for the congregation, because the presence of the Spirit was made evident in the miraculous gifts that appeared in connection with baptism (Acts. xix. 5-6).

Now it is of course certain that the forgiveness of sin is received by every penitent and believing man as such (Acts ii. 19; v. 31; x. 43; cf. Rom. iii. 25), and the same is true of the gifts of the Holy Ghost (Gal. iii. 5, 14; Eph. i. 13). The congregation of the first Pentecost received the Holy Ghost without baptism (Acts ii. 4), and the same is true of the first Christians among the Gentiles, to the baptism of whom Peter was brought by this very fact (Acts x. 44, 48). The case even occurs that the signs of the bestowal of the Spirit do not immediately follow baptism (Acts viii. 12, 16). It is accordingly not said that God limits the bestowal of these two gifts to the application of the rite of baptism. But in so far as the determination to be baptized presupposes faith in Jesus as the Mediator of redemption, the reception of these two gifts could in an ordinary way be connected with the performance of the baptismal rite. And as the rite of immersion as such undoubtedly had a symbolical signification, whether it was referred to the washing away of the pollution of guilt or to the renewal through the death of the

old man and the birth of the new in the communion of life with Christ through the Spirit, in each case baptism could have only the one significance, to seal as a pledge the reception of these two gifts of salvation, as it sealed in John's baptism the change of heart, the determination of the baptized persons. In this way Paul understood the meaning of baptism, in saying that baptism meant being buried with Christ (Rom. vi. 4). For as being buried confirms as a finality the fact that a person is dead (1 Cor. xv. 4), thus baptism confirms the reception of these two gifts of grace and thereby makes the believer certain of their possession amid all doubts and uncertainties. This becomes perfectly clear only by the fact that Paul sees in being buried the New Testament antetype of the Old Testament circumcision (Col. ii. 11). Typology is to be found not in this, that the laying aside of the carnal life in the death of the old man is compared with the doing away of the unclean foreskin, but in this, that circumcision was the sign of the covenant of grace between God and Israel (Rom. iv. 11) and that in the same way the reception into the new covenant and the participation in its possession of redemption was sealed and pledged in baptism.

4. The Lord's Supper.—In the Christian congregation from the beginning the rite of the breaking of bread was celebrated in connection with the common love feast (Acts ii. 42) and was connected with the consecration of the cup (1 Cor. x. 16). It was called the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 20), because it was held after the manner of the sacred act which Jesus performed on the night in which He was betrayed and in connection with His parting meal with the disciples. The original apostolic tradition (Mark xiv. 22 sqq.) in this connection makes as little mention of a direct order to repeat the rite from the life of Christ as it does in connection with baptism. It was the immediate impression which the disciples had received of that act of Christ,

that caused it to be made a regularly repeated rite. On the other hand Paul, who of course knew of the details of that act of Christ from the reports of the disciples, had received a revelation in reference to the purpose and the significance of the rite (1 Cor. xi. 23), which contained the express command to repeat the breaking of the bread and the consecration of the cup in conjunction with the repetition of words spoken by Christ as an interpretation of that act (1 Cor. xi. 24-25). That this act of Christ was symbolical is clear from the fact that in this supper He bases His words on the significant customs of the Passover and the usual manner of their interpretation. But from this very fact it follows, that He did not purpose to compare the bread with His body or the wine with His blood. As He broke the bread at the close of the Paschal feast in order to distribute it, thus His body is to be broken by a violent death, so that each one can receive a part of it. Whether Jesus in this connection spoke of a taking and an eating is a matter on which the evangelists do not report alike; whether He expressly designated His body, as is reported by Paul, as being given for our salvation, is naturally in itself a matter of indifference, since both was contained in the symbolism of the act. His death was not to be looked upon as a dark destiny, but as a means through which God prepares His gift of redemption for the believers, for which reason Jesus also spoke words of thanksgiving over the bread. As He gave them the bread not to look at or to contemplate, but to eat, thus they should receive His body given into death, in order personally to appropriate the redemption thereby given.

What redemption is here meant is seen in perfect clearness from the second part of the rite, which immediately follows at the close of the eating of the Passover (1 Cor. xi. 25). As He gives the cup, which He had also consecrated with thanksgiving, to all of them to drink, Jesus declares

that the drinking in common from this cup is a symbol of their common participation in the new covenant. But as it was possible to drink from the cup if it was filled with (red) wine, thus too they could participate in this covenant only on the basis of His blood that had been shed through a violent death, that cleansed them from all pollution of guilt and thus made possible their communion with God. The more original and certainly older forms of the tradition of the words as given by Paul, say nothing really of a comparison of the wine with the blood, and it is only Mark xiv. 24 that does this, and thereby the reference to Ex. xxiv. 8 is made all the clearer. Whether Jesus designates the covenant as a new one, is naturally in itself a matter of indifference, since it certainly was such for the adherents of the old covenant to whom He is speaking. It is impossible that the disciples should have thought that the words of Jesus referred to a glorified body or even to a glorified blood (which in itself is an idea which according to 1 Cor. xv. 50 would be self-contradictory), since Jesus at the time was yet in His body in their midst. Just as little could they think of receiving His body and His blood given for them into death, since His body had not yet been given for them into death and his blood had not yet been shed. They could accordingly have looked upon the words only as symbolical and prophetic, representing figuratively what was to take place after His impending death. Then each one of them was to have a part in Jesus through the body given unto death, just as He now was giving to each one bread to eat; then the common cup was to be to them a picture of the covenant into which they entered through His blood.

Now we can also understand why there was no need of a command to repeat this rite for the participants in His last supper, as this repetition could have a real meaning only after His death. It is not the purpose of a symbolical act

only to give a picture of a thing. Its purpose is, whether its object is to picture an event in the past (as in the case of John's baptism) or an event in the future (cf. e. g. Acts xxi. 11), not only to recall these things but to emphasise and to seal the obligations and the promises that these events bring with them. Since now in the symbolical action of Jesus the eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup, as He established these, is the real centre, but the event, to which He refers in His words of institution could occur only after His death, it lies in the nature of the case that this eating and drinking must be repeated after His death, if that to which Christ refers is really to be enjoyed, namely the receiving of the body and the participation in the new covenant on the basis of His blood and the being confirmed in this again and again through this symbolical action.

That in the primitive church, on the basis of apostolic tradition, this subject was thus regarded is perfectly clear from 1 Cor. x. 16. It is not Paul's purpose here to give an exposition of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper; but in proof of this that a heathen sacrificial feast transfers the participants into a real and sinful communion with the demons (x. 20), he appeals to the analogy of the Christian Lord's Supper and its well known effects. Of course he does not say that this produces a communion with the living and present Christ, which thought would naturally be first suggested by this analogy, since this communion according to His teaching is brought about by the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and thereby the symbolism of the eating and the drinking, as also the words of interpretation spoken by Jesus, would be emptied of their contents. He rather calls to mind, that though the partaking of the consecrated cup in His Supper we receive a share in the blood of Christ, and through the eating of the bread broken we participate in the body of Christ, and that in this way the redemptive

appropriation of His death is effected. In what real sense Paul understands this matter is seen from x. 17, where he draws attention to the fact, that the bread, for the very reason that it transfers us into the communion with the body of Christ, unites the congregation into an organic unity, which ordinary bread could not accomplish, but only that bread that is the means for common participation in a centre that is vital to an entire organism.

Only on this ground can the statements made concerning the unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper be explained. It had occurred in Corinth that gluttony had been practised in connection with the love feasts and that the Corinthians had thereby made themselves incapacitated to receive the Lord's Supper in the proper religious spirit, in which act, Paul sees despising of the rite on the part of the congregation of God, who had met for a religious celebration and who were treated like guests at a common feast (xi. 21-22). He does not say that they had sinned in reference to the bread and the wine as sacred symbols, because they had not distinguished between the Lord's Supper and the common food, but that they were guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord, because they did not judge the body which they had received, i. e., did not esteem properly its blessed significance (xi. 27, 29). Not by the religious misinterpretation and denial of the significance of eating and drinking, but only when they had sinned in reference to the gift that had been received, simply from the fact that they received it with unconsecrated mind, could this eating and drinking turn out to be a judgment for them of God (xi. 29). But what the blessing was which they received from this same eating and drinking, of this there could be no doubt, as indicated by the symbolical meaning, as interpreted by Jesus and ever accepted by the congregation. If God had assigned to the death of Christ its importance for the work of redemption, because this death must work

in those who looked upon Him as the highest revelation of the grace of God which it was God's purpose to bring about through the death of His Son, then there was a constant need of new strength for this faith, if men would participate in the fruits of the death of Christ. But as the symbolical action of the congregation in the Lord's Supper sealed and strengthened this anew, that they through this eating and drinking achieved a strong participation in the body that had been given unto death for them and in the blood that had been shed for them, then the faith in the redemptive importance of this death would thereby necessarily be strengthened anew and make this faith all the more potent for their religious life.

5. The Two Sacraments.—Paul describes the deliverance of Israel and the passage of the Red Sea and their wonderful preservation in the desert as a type of the experience of grace which all Christians make. In the former he sees, as is evident from his description, an analogy of baptism; in the latter, of the Lord's Supper; and in this way he classifies the two as unique mediums of special exhibitions of grace, i. e., as means of grace. As the passage of the Red Sea for the first time enabled the children of Israel to make the covenant with God at Sinai, by which they became certain of all of the promised blessings of their God (1 Cor. x. 1-2); thus there stands at the portals of Christianity the rite of baptism, which seals for the believer his entrance into the new covenant and certifies to him the possession of all of the redemptive blessings that this covenant conveys. It is a matter of no doubt that in the New Testament times only adults were baptized, as all the statements made concerning baptism presupposed that this rite was administered to adults. On the other hand, the very passage that proves this in the most undoubted manner shows at the same time that after Christianity had gained firm roots in the family life, the

baptism of children had to become a common practice. If according to 1 Cor. vii. 14 the children of Christian parents, by virtue of the divinely established family covenant, in which they are born, are consecrated to God, i e., are intended for reception into the new covenant, in which the full sonship of God is realised, then there is nothing forbids men to apply to them also that rite, which seals this reception, and thus from the very outset to assure to them those redemptive possessions which this covenant bestows.

Naturally the statements found in the New Testament on the subject of baptism can be applied only *mutatis mutandis* to the baptism of children. But the faith which conditions the real acceptance of the promised blessings of baptism is, according to the New Testament teachings, a gift of God, which He brings about through His word. Although the Church by the arrangement of the sponsor institute sought to make the Christian education of the children an assured thing, through which the word would be taught them at an early age, the generation of faith nevertheless depended solely on the influence of the word. But that children, too, can be the recipients of spiritual blessings is taught by Jesus Himself (Mark x. 6). It was in perfect harmony with the deepest conviction of the religion of the New Testament, according to which salvation can be earned or secured by no human works, that the believer in his later life should be perfectly certain of this, that at a time when he was not able to perform any act of the kind, his reception into the new covenant and participation in its blessings had already been sealed. This importance of baptism could not be changed either when the Church substituted in the application of the rite sprinkling instead of immersion, or when the original baptismal formula was enlarged into a fuller confession as found in Matt. xxviii. 19. And then when the effect

of the rite was made dependent in any way on the faith of the one who was baptized or his parents, or even on faith in the child itself, or when by a repetition of the act or by confirmation the attempt was made to render the advantages of baptism safe, these things were a complete misconception of the sacramental significance of the act. Baptism if performed in the case of children in conformity with the counsel and the will of God, was intended to make the adult, amid all the dangers of sin, sure that God had intended him for redemption and would surely lead him to redemption, as soon as he would seize this salvation by faith and permit the grace of God to work in him.

The same is true of development in regard to the Lord's Supper, as soon as this had been established as an independent part of the cultus. Paul saw in it an analogy of the preservation and support of Israel in the desert, by interpreting manna as a spiritually produced food and the water from the rock as a spiritually produced drink (1 Cor. x. 3-4). He no doubt means that this sustained not only the bodily life of Israel, but at the same time added strength to their faith in the providential care of God. He regarded the production of such strength as the specific effect of the Lord's Supper, which by sealing sacramentally the certainty of a participation in the body and the blood of Christ, i. e., in the salvation achieved through His death produces such renewed strength. Certainly the Church acted in harmony with the apostle when it sought to satisfy his demand for self-examination before partaking of the Supper by the establishment of the confessional service (1 Cor. xi. 28), as far as such a thing can be done by a human arrangement. But when the effort is made to make these effects of the Lord's Supper dependent on the faith of the one who celebrates it or of the one who receives it, as this is often done, and when thus instead of inviting to the Supper men are frightened away

by an arbitrarily constructed religico-ethical "worthiness" and they deny themselves these blessings, then this must be regarded as based upon a perversion of its sacramental significance, as such perversion is also often applied in the case of baptism.

The Lord's Supper gives its blessings unconditionally. It effects the participation in the body and the blood of Christ, which is promised upon the condition of eating and drinking. Whether this will become a curse or a blessing to the recipient, depends, as is the case with all divine gifts, upon the way in which the recipient receives and makes use of this gift. The reception of the preaching of the word of God also, or of baptism is not without significance for him who despises and rejects these blessings, but they become for him a judgment of condemnation (cf. John xii. 48), as Paul states in reference to the unworthy use of the Lord's Supper. How little, however, those of the Lord's Supper presupposes an especially developed faith in the redemptive significance of Christ's death, is clear from the fact, that its very purpose is to strengthen this faith. The same is true with reference to the demand of a special worthiness for its reception. For the very reason that experience shows how easily faith is shaken through weakness and unworthiness, it is the purpose of the Lord's Supper to give the assurance, that the man who is anxious for redemption can always take part in the salvation achieved through the death of Christ. Only by the measure of the desire for redemption can the worthiness for the reception of it be gauged.

If, however, through baptism the participation in the blessings of Christ's redemption and through the Lord's Supper the undisturbed possession of the same are made certain, then it is clear that there can be no other sacraments besides these. As all of the revelations of God are revelation of acts, thus He in the establishment of these sac-

raments gives the conclusion of the revelation of redemption that was begun with the sending of Christ into His atoning death and was continued by His exaltation and the sending of the Holy Ghost. We weak human beings, bound by the limitations of our sense experiences must have some visible signs and seals of the fact that we have part in the salvation that has been won through Christ, as baptism, which is applied but once and can never be recalled, seals our entrance into the covenant of grace, thus the Lord's Supper makes us certain of this, that the continuing in the covenant of grace even amid repeated sins, can not be abrogated, if we return again seeking salvation. With this the circle of divine arrangements for salvation, through which salvation of Christ is to be imparted to us, is completed.

PART THREE

THE REALIZATION OF REDEMPTION

PART III

THE REALIZATION OF REDEMPTION

CHAPTER XV.

ELECTION AND CALL

1. **The Election.**—When God selects Israel as His own peculiar people, He in Deut. vii. 6 sqq. emphasizes the fact that this is done out of pure love on account of the oath which He had sworn to their fathers, and not for the sake of any merit of the people or on account of their righteousness. The subject here is the historical act of appointing Israel to be the bearers of the preparatory revelation of redemption and of all the blessings connected therewith. This appointment could not be recalled (Rom. iii. 5; xi. 28). No apostasy and no hardening of heart on the part of the people could prevent the carrying out of this appointment. God knew the people before He selected them (Rom. xi. 2) and accordingly knew that it was a rebellious and disobedient people (Rom. x. 21, according to Is. lxxv. 2; cf. Deut. ix. 6), and could not reject them now when they showed themselves as such. But from the selection of Israel to be His people (Is. xlv. 4) it by no means follows, that all the bodily descendants of the Patriarchs were to take part in that redemption that God was preparing in this people and through this people for the world. Paul has expressly shown that, as the times of the Patriarchs

teach, God had decided to select from among the sons of the Patriarchs those who were to be the bearers of His redemptive plan and its blessings (Rom. ix. 6-13). According to all of the prophets, the time of redemption is preceded by a great judgment of God, through which all those members of the nation who are unworthy are to be rejected. This divine judgment it is that the last of the prophets predicts (Matt. iii. 10), in order to arouse the people to prepare through a change of heart for the advent of redemption (Matt. iii. 8). And when God's counsel of redemption was being fulfilled and the Redeemer of Israel appeared, whose earthly career was destined for Israel alone (Matt. xv. 24), He expressly declares the redemptive will of God, according to which there are only distinct classes among the people to whom He would make clear the saving revelation (Matt. xi. 25 sqq.). The company of the twelve, to whom the last discourses of the Saviour are addressed, represents not only those who are selected for a specific purpose (Matt. vi. 70) but also the whole circle of disciples whom Jesus has selected from the unbelieving world (Matt. xv. 19). In reference to these Jesus says directly, that God had determined to give the kingdom not to the nation as a whole but to this small fold of His disciples.

In the preaching of the apostles also it is not the people of Israel as a nation, but the congregation of the believers out of Israel that is the chosen generation, the holy nation the people of God's possession (1 Pet. ii. 9; v. 13). All unbelievers are henceforth to be excluded from the chosen people (Acts iii. 23; 1 Pet. ii. 7-8). But this is not to be understood as if the others had been elected on account of their faith; but that they have been chosen in order to become rich on the ground of their faith in the possession of a present and a future redemption (James ii. 5). It is indeed true that in conformity with the divine foreknowledge, which selected Israel as His own people

(Rom. ii. 2), they were chosen in baptism, by which rite they were consecrated through the Spirit to be God's possession, to acquire the possession of the New Testament redemptive gift of the forgiveness of sin and to fulfil the duty of obedience connected with this covenant (1 Pet. i. 1-2). But only a select few from Israel has gained redemption in the time of the apostle (Rom. xi. 7). Jesus, too, had already drawn attention to the fact that many Gentiles would participate in the consummation of the kingdom (Luke xiii. 29; cf. John x. 16); that if Israel as a nation became unfaithful to their mission, the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to another people (Matt. xxi. 43), as the Baptist had already said that God could raise up new children of Abraham of the stones (Matt. iii. 9). And when this possibility had become a sad reality, then Paul was entrusted with the special commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. But here again it is not said that the Gentiles as such are to have part in redemption. Paul says also of the members of a congregation that was predominantly of Gentile origin (1 Cor. i. 27-28; cf. 1 Thess. i. 4) that they had been chosen. But they were not elected because they had become believers, but as many as were appointed for eternal life, these came to faith (Acts xiii. 48).

It is an old error to maintain that according to New Testament teaching, this is based on an eternal decree of election. This opinion is based on 2 Thess. ii. 13, where according to the corrected reading it is not said, that God had selected the readers from the beginning, but that He had chosen them to be first fruits (dedicated to Him); which fact is confirmed most clearly by the fact that exactly as it is done in 1 Pet. i. 2, this is described as having taken place through the consecrating act of baptism. Eph. i. 4 also merely says that God before the foundation of the world had in the Mediator of redemption chosen those, who

through Him were to attain to redemption, and that accordingly those, who now through Him really secure this redemption by virtue of an eternal decree had been elected for this end. Just as surely as Paul believes that the selection of Israel, which took place on account of the fathers, was an historical act (Rom. xi. 28) so certainly too does he teach that the selection of those who in Christ attain salvation is such an act. In Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8, it is not said that the writing in the book of life (xxi. 27; cf. Luke x. 20; Phil. iv. 31), which predestinates certain persons to eternal life, took place before the foundation of the world, but in contrast to those whose names had at one time perhaps been written in the book of life but had been erased (iii. 5) the writer here speaks of those whose names had never been entered here.

The actual selection of those in whom God will realize the redemption through Christ from among the mass of those who are in need of salvation, is by no means in contradiction to the universal will of God for the redemption of all mankind. Everywhere the entire world is represented as the object of the sending of Christ (John iii. 16) and of His redemptive death. As little as the passage Rom. xi. 32, in which it is only said, that God at the end of His ways has mercy upon the Jews as well as the Gentiles, speaks of the final selection of all individuals, in which interpretation the very idea of a selection would be discarded, so little are those passages that emphasize the universality of the divine redemptive purposes (1 Tim. ii. 4; Tit. ii. 11) contrary to the Pauline doctrine of election. God does not wish that a single man be lost, but that all shall repent and live (2 Pet. iii. 9). Even the final judgments of God's wrath have always this purpose in view to arouse the world to repentance (Rev. ix. 20-21; xvi. 9, 11), although the effort may be useless. For there is in fact a sin that cannot be forgiven (Matt. xii. 31-32), namely the

final self-hardening of the heart against the undoubted proofs of the revelation of God in Christ, the definite disobedience against the divine message of salvation (Acts iii. 23). But the Scriptures nowhere speak of the predestination of individuals to condemnation. This is not even done by 1 Pet. ii. 8, where the apostle speaks only of destruction as ordered by God, as the punishment for the final disobedience. It is true that the kingdom has been prepared for its blessed adherents before the foundation of the world; but the eternal fire is not *originally* established for any human being but only for the devil and his angels (Matt. xxv. 34, 41). The vessels of wrath (Rom. ix. 22) are not those who were prepared by God for this purpose, but are those who are ripe for the destruction, which they had through their unbelief brought upon themselves. Over against the elective grace of God there is no election to condemnation, but there is a divine judgment of hardening (Rom. ix. 18; xi. 7), which by its nature presupposes an attitude hostile to God. There is no *double* degree of election.

2. **The Conditions of Election.**—When God selects from the mass who are in need of the redemption those whom He will bring to salvation, then in accordance with His universal will of redemption, the reason for this cannot be, that He does not want to give to others to participate in redemption, but because He considers them, at least for the time being, as unworthy of this participation. If the preparation of salvation in Christ is as such a work of divine grace, then it is self-evident that the realization of redemption also, and including this also the election for this, depends upon this divine grace; and that this is an election (Rom. xi. 5). According to his method of interpreting the Scriptures, Paul sees in the words of Malachi i. 2-3, a reference to this, that the preferring of Jacob to Esau, according to which God determined that the former

and not the latter should be the bearer of salvation, is based entirely upon the love that He bestowed upon the one but withheld from the other (Rom. ix. 13). It is not an historical account of that matter that he proposes to give, but he sees in the statement of the subject only the purposes of the Scriptures to establish the fundamental principle of the divine election. In the following verses he expressly shows that divine mercy is in its character perfectly free (ix. 14-15), just as God impends the hardening of the heart according to His free choice (ix. 17-18); that in His election He can be bound neither by bodily descent nor by man's deeds or virtues (ix. 11, 16). It is true that Paul, to refute the charge that in this is an injustice appeals to the right of the Creator to do what He pleases with the creature (ix. 20-21); but ix. 22 and the whole following section (ix. 30; x. 21) show that, unless we would involve the apostle in hopeless contradictions, God, as in the case before Him, when Israel as the people of promise in their majority has lost salvation, has not made use of this right. Rather He has borne with great patience the people that deserved His righteous wrath, although at the same time with the purpose of choosing for Himself other vessels of grace outside of Israel (ix. 23-24). Undoubtedly the emphasis put upon the liberty of free choice on the part of God in the matter of the elective decree, as shown by the connection, has only the purpose of excluding the idea that the Israel of Paul's day, on account of its bodily descent and its attempt at the fulfilment of the law, has a right to a participation in redemption. But from this very fact it follows, that the opposite of this is not, as is so often maintained, the idea, that God has chosen individuals in a purely arbitrary manner, to give to them salvation. Rather is the opposite thought this, that He reserves to Himself, to establish according to His own choice the conditions that are attached to His election.

But that this choice is not at all independent of the character of the individual, is clear from the fact that Paul constantly bases the acquisition of redemption to which men are elected, on the fact that they are known of God (1 Cor. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 9). It is expressly stated concerning the decree of election (Rom. ix. 11) that God has determined to save those whom He foreknew (viii. 28-29). It is self-evident that this does not mean that He foresaw their faith, which God Himself works in the believer (Tit. i. 1); but rather that is meant which the Searcher of hearts (Rom. viii. 27) alone can know, namely, the capacity to receive the redemption that He would work in them. Wherein this consists Jesus has Himself repeatedly indicated. Sometimes He calls it simplicity, that is not prejudiced by pride in one's own wisdom over against salvation (Matt. xi. 25; John ix. 39, 41); sometimes, poverty in spirit, that hungers for righteousness (Matt. v. 3, 6; xi. 28); sometimes, the humblemindedness of children, that is conscious of its own weakness and is ready to receive what it stands in need of (Matt. xviii. 3-4; Mark xi. 14-15). The feeling of need as well as the desire for deliverance has as a matter of fact been developed to the greatest degree among the poor and the uneducated of this world, who have not been misled by their prejudices and the deception of wealth and have thus kept their capacity of accepting the revealed redemption of God. Therefore, the fact is expressly emphasized both over against the believers from among the Jews as well as those from among the Gentiles, that God has elected the foolish and the poor and the weak and the despised (James ii. 5; 1 Cor. i. 27-28).

But from the positive side also Jesus mentions the striving for the fulfilment of the divine will (John vii. 17) the obedience to the truth (John xviii. 37; cf. xviii. 47), belonging to God (John xvii. 6, 9), love for God and all divine things (John viii. 24) as conditions for participat-

ing in redemption. And here, too, the preaching of the apostles only confirms that God has foreknown those whom He before predestinated for salvation as those who love Him, as this appears with perfect certainty from the connection of Rom. viii. 28-29 (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 9; viii. 3). It is self-evident that the apostle does not here speak of that love for God which is only the fruit of the love of God that has been experienced in Christ, but of that love for God which is awakened by the entire preparation of salvation. For Paul expressly states that these vessels of mercy were before prepared by God (Rom. ix. 23). And James too presupposes that the Old Testament predictions of life and salvation are based on the fulfilment of the fundamental law of love to God (James i. 12; vii. 5); not only the law which calls forth a knowledge of sin and of the need of redemption, but yet through its fundamental command must have awakened in the pious the beginnings of a love for God, but also prophecy with its promises, had as their mission to prepare the hearts for the coming redemption. But we have already seen that the divine educational work found means to accomplish these purposes also in the heathen world.

This statement is not in contradiction to the fact that election is not dependent on human efforts, conduct and merit. For this humble capacity to receive salvation, as also the positive desire to attain the goal to which Jesus would lead us, produces only the willingness to be led to it. Above all, both are themselves first brought about by the preparatory grace of redemption, and are accordingly not at all human merits. This preparatory work of grace, however, was applied in the law and in the prophets, not only to the elect individuals, but to all the peoples of Israel, and to the whole Gentile world in the original revelation and in the providential guidance of their history. Thereby, too, the universality of the divine purposes of redemption

is shown, which is not destroyed by the fact that those have been elected for salvation in Christ, which first becomes operative in the individuals, who have proved that they are capable of receiving the proffered means of redemption. Not because they accomplished what others could not accomplish, but because they suffered that preparatory revelation of redemption that was intended for all to effect in them what it was intended to effect. The others are not excluded from election because salvation is not intended for them, but because they closed their hearts to the preparatory revelation of redemption, and hence, for the present at least, are not able to receive the salvation in Christ.

3. The Universality of the Offer of Redemption.

—As did all the prophets, the Baptist also belonged to these messengers of God through whom the preparatory revelation of redemption was to get ready the hearts of men for salvation in Christ. As the former at all times demanded the return of their people thus John demands a change of heart. This change was to be nothing else than to a preparation for the reception of redemption. The natural man lives solely for his temporal interests. He does not desire God or His redemption. He is under the supremacy of sin, the guilt of which does not burden him, and the yoke of which he does not want to throw off. In this state John found his people and called to them to repent. His baptism to repentance could symbolically picture this resolution to repentance, which naturally then had to evince its sincerity by works (Matt. iii. 8). But all this only made man ready to receive redemption; for just the most sincere who received this baptism and its obligations soon must have felt their entire inability to fulfill them, by which fact the desire for redemption must have been aroused in their hearts. For this very reason the Baptist had directed attention to the Messiah,

who through His baptism of the Holy Ghost was to bring this salvation itself (Matt. iii. 11).

We have seen that the preaching of Jesus differed from that of all the prophets in this, that He did not make the coming of the time of redemption dependent on repentance, but declared that salvation was now at hand. But the first object that had to be effected through this preaching was a change of heart in the people. The Baptist had not been able to fulfill his mission of putting his nation in a condition ready for the Messianic redemption (Luke i. 17), because men did not recognize him as the forerunner of the Messiah; and instead of permitting him to accomplish then what he desired to accomplish they did to him what they would, i. e., they did away with him (Matt. xvii. 11-12). Jesus had to prepare the way for Himself, but with this difference, that He did not seek to attain the conversion of the people by the threat of impending judgment, but by the offer of redemption. This offer of redemption, however, went out to the whole people, because the purposes of God were universal. It was the sinner above all others who was called (Mark ii. 17). He compares the offer of redemption to an invitation to a supper (Matt. xxii. 1 sqq.). Through this gracious offer He hoped to bring about the change in the heart of the sinner (Luke v. 32). Through this presentation of the redemption that had appeared in Him He wished to free His people of their worldlymindedness, the folly of which He exposed (Matt. xii. 15-21). But He has already shown in the parable of the sower that the success of this offer of redemption was not the same in all cases, and that it was really only to a small degree. He has not explained this by the fact that only a few are elected, but because of the condition of the heart which would not admit the seed of the word. As a whole the people continued to be unrepentant (Mark xi. 20; xii. 41; cf. Luke xiii. 3, 5); they remained in

spiritual death (Matt. viii. 22; Luke xv. 32) to arouse spiritual life in whom John had designated as the specific mission of Jesus.

This fact is also the presupposition of the Parable of the Great Supper. On account of their temporal interests the majority despise the invitation to the supper (Matt. xxii. 5; Luke xiv. 18 sqq.). Christ then draws the lesson from this Parable that many are called, but few are chosen (Matt. xxii. 14). Here, too, as the Parable shows, an election of a few in the sense of the apostolic teachings is not spoken of. Just as the call that is extended in the offer of redemption for repentance is universal, so those selected are not certain ones predestinated to salvation, but those who have willingly accepted salvation, and have also shown themselves willing to fulfil the conditions that this acceptance implies. These were the disciples in the wider sense of the word who followed Christ on His journeys, and who always gladly listened to His word and suffered themselves to be guided by it. These He also calls (Matt. xxiv. 24, 31; Luke xviii. 3) His chosen ones in the sense of Rom. xvi. 3.

Although Jesus declares that the unwillingness of His people to accept His preaching of repentance is a divine judgment of hardening (Mark iv. 11-12), He still to the end continued to make this offer of redemption. Since He always connects His promises with certain conditions, on the fulfilment of which the participation in redemption depended, He did this only in order to invite the people to their fulfilment, which could be accomplished only by the change of heart that He demanded. Those that were weary and heavy laden, whom He called to Himself, so that in His teachings and training they could find rest for their souls (Matt. xi. 28 sqq.), still first had to learn through His preaching of repentance that they were burdened with a load of obligations, which they could with

all their strength not remove. When He glorifies God for His counsel, according to which salvation has been hidden from the wise and the prudent (Matt. xi. 25-26), He did this only because thereby the revelation of redemption was opened to all mankind. The wise and the prudent too needed only to recognize in this change of heart that He demanded that their wisdom and prudence did them no good for the attainment of redemption, in order to receive this redemption in simplicity of spirit. However clear it gradually became that the worldly spirit of His people was not to be broken; that, humanly speaking, it was impossible for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God, yet Jesus put His confidence in the almighty grace of God that works through the word that He preached and that could break these bonds (Mark x. 25, 27). Even the judgment of hardening is, according to the biblical view, not irrevocable. For this very reason Christ did not permit the temporary hardening of His people's hearts to hinder Him in continuing the offer of the preparatory grace by His own offer of redemption and His preaching of repentance.

When by His death He had departed from the earth and through His exaltation had given the great Jonah sign, in which Jesus saw the last revelation of grace on the part of God through which the nation was to be led to repentance (Matt. xii. 39-40; cf. John viii. 28) the apostles took up the work again with the demand for a change of heart (Acts ii. 38; iii. 19). Now a new motive for this change had been given to the people through the crucifixion of Him who through His exaltation had been proven to be the Messiah (Acts iii. 12 sqq.); now the redemption that at the advent of the Messiah had been preached only as one at the point of coming, as was the case in Christ's preaching (Matt. i. 19), was declared to be one that had already appeared. With this, for the time being, the time

of the preparation of redemption had been closed. Those in whom this message of redemption did not produce a change of heart (Acts v. 31) could not partake of this redemption, and for that reason, too, they could experience no further manifestations of God's grace, through which this redemption was to be realized. As a matter of fact, the apostles' preaching did not bring about the conversion of Israel. The people on the whole became the objects of the judgment of hardening (Rom. xi. 8 sqq.; Acts xxviii. 25 sqq.). But even this does not hinder that further gracious guidance and offer of redemption on the part of God, finally to lead the chosen people to a knowledge of the truth (Rom. xi. 14; 2 Cor. iii. 16), and Paul has predicted such a conversion of Israel (Rom. xi. 25 sqq.).

The same is naturally true also of the mission preaching among the Gentiles. Paul, too, had no other means than the Baptist had when he tried through threats of the coming judgment to awaken the heathen out of their sleep of sin and to bring about a change of heart (Acts xvii. 31); so that they, too, could repent and receive life (Acts xi. 18). But naturally he could make use of this means in a specially effective manner, because he preached that Christ who had been raised from the dead and who would soon return again as the Saviour for the impending judgment of wrath (1 Thess. i. 10). In this way it happened in the end that the grace that works repentance and the grace that through the preaching of redemption in Christ effects redemption itself finally became to be one and the same, and that the preaching of the apostles had to bring about both. It is true that it was addressed to all, but what it could work in all was only repentance and the desire for redemption. Accordingly as this was accomplished those that were saved were separated from those that were lost (1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15), i. e., the elect from the non-elect. While the specific contents of the gospels were for the latter, both

Jews and Gentiles, an offence and foolishness, the former found in it a power of God (1 Cor. i. 24). For them it became a savour unto life; for the others unto death (2 Cor. ii. 16).

4. **The Call as the Work of Divine Grace.**—Jesus Himself could begin His special work only among those who became His disciples, who followed Him and listened to His words. Only those who came to Him could attain to that faith that He was the bread of life that would satisfy to all eternity (John vi. 35). But he who came to Him was one that had been given to Him by the Father (John vi. 37), i. e., one of those chosen by the Father, because either the preparatory revelation of the Old Testament or the preaching unto repentance by Christ, through the influence of God's grace, had aroused in him that desire of salvation that drove him to Jesus. But that which really brought redemption to him was the revelation of God that he found in Jesus. This could be worked only through a new influence of divine grace, by which he learned to know Him as that He really was, as Jesus says (Matt. xvi. 17). This was the revelation of redemption that had been given to Jesus, in order to transmit it to the simple-minded, i. e., those ready to receive it (Matt. xi. 25 sqq.). For naturally this could result only through the manifestation of Himself in word and deed. In this way the Father drew them to the Son and began to instruct those in reference to the salvation in him who followed this call; but men had to learn in this school of his (John vi. 44-45). But only those did this in whom through the preparatory grace the desire for redemption had been awakened, the sheep of His fold, who had in following Him learned to listen to His voice (John x. 3, 14). These accepted the word of God that Jesus brought them and thereby came to knowledge and to faith (John xvii. 7-8). But what gave to His word an effect in the call of individuals that it did not have in the great

mass of people, was the working of the grace of God in those whom He selected from the world (John xv. 19), because they had fulfilled the conditions that made participation in salvation possible (Chap. xv. 2). This working of divine grace in contradistinction from the general offer of redemption of which Jesus speaks, the apostolic preaching in the narrow sense he terms the call.

Here, too, the connection with the Old Testament is made prominent; since the call is a correlative idea to election (cf. Is. xlii. 6). The members of the first covenant are the called (Heb. ix. 15), the chosen generation in the old as well as in the new covenant as such have been called to perfect salvation (1 Pet. ii. 9). In the idea of election the thought is only that the divine grace selects from the mass of those who are in need of redemption those individuals who will permit themselves to be saved. The idea in the call is the thought of the goal to which election tends, whether this be thought to be the attainment of the highest redemption or the fulfilment of highest duty, both of which sides of the subject mutually condition each other. While James speaks only of the election (James ii. 15) the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the call (Heb. iii. 1). As correlative conceptions both can also be united in such a way, that the call precedes (2 Pet. i. 10). Paul was the first to distinguish the two ideas sharply. According to him election is an inner divine act, which then is one that cannot be seen or known, while the call is the work of divine grace through which the conditions that are contained in election begin to be realized (Rom. viii. 30), through which the divine counsel of election becomes visible and knowable. The Corinthians are to recognize their call by having experienced the effects of grace in the gospel (1 Cor. i. 24-26), in order to learn from this, what class of men God has chosen (1 Cor. i. 27-28). Paul recognizes the election of the Thessalonians by the success of the gospel among them

(1 Thess. i. 4-5); for through the gospel the call in all cases comes (2 Thess. ii. 14). The working of divine grace consists in this very thing, that God gives to the preaching of the apostle that is filled with the Spirit, the power to call the elect through the awakening of faith to become a congregation, i. e., to induce them to become members of the congregation, by permitting themselves to be baptized in the name of Jesus. This result is an infallible one, not because it forces the hearer in an irresistible manner, but only because it takes place only in those whom the Searcher of hearts has recognized as ready to accept salvation and has therefore chosen for the realization of this redemption. All the members of the congregation are accordingly called (Rom. i. 7) and therefore also elect; for only the elect are called.

The working of divine grace in the call consists in this, that God opens the heart of the individual for the preaching of Christ (Acts xvi. 14), that this preaching prove it a spiritual power in him, so that he accepts the word (1 Thess. i. 5-6) not as the word of man but of God (1 Thess. ii. 13). Being such this word can demand and does demand that its declaration be accepted as true and that its directions be followed. In Acts v. 32 the faithful acceptance of this word is in so many words designated as obedience to God. Even Paul, who at all times puts faith into the sharpest antithesis possible to all works, calls this effect of the apostolic message the obedience of faith (Rom. i. 5). This obedience is without doubt the product of divine grace and hence not a human achievement; for the acceptance of a human word as divine can be done only when it proves itself to be such (cf. chap. iii. 5). And yet Paul declares that the heathen are the objects of God's condemnation, if they do not obey the gospel concerning Christ; and accordingly he makes them responsible for doing it or not (2 Thess. i. 8). In the same way he declares it to be inexcusable guilt

on the part of Israel if they do not obey the gospel (Rom. xi. 16-21). The deep foundation for this he has laid in Rom. ix. 30-33. Israel refused to desist from its false striving for righteousness (cf. x. 3); therefore the preaching of Christ has become to it a rock of offence. In exactly the same way the Gentiles are not willing to give up their sinful lives and obey the gospel. Because they do not permit the word to work in them a change of heart it could also work in them no obedience of faith; but that this could not be done was their fault.

But now it is certain, that the faith which induced the individuals through baptism to suffer themselves to be received into the congregation, was in many cases only a weak beginning of a Christian life. Paul distinguishes very sharply between a believing acceptance of the gospel, which is the condition of his labors for salvation (1 Cor. i. 21; Rom. i. 16) and that confidence which brings with it the deliverance of redemption, which the gospel as the power of God works in those who accept it in faith, which takes place only in those that are called (1 Cor. i. 24). But both are in his eyes faith. He does not distinguish dogmatically in this case; but in Rom. i. 17 he expressly says that the revelation of God's justice, in which he includes the whole salvation in Christ, works only through faith, that is, the faith that accepts the gospel, works that faith that is a saving confidence in the salvation through Christ. In the call faith can be worked only in the former sense.

5. Election as the Basis of the Certainty of Redemption.—If according to 2 Pet. i. 10, it is first necessary to make our calling and election sure, then it is clear that election is not to be understood as an eternal decree of salvation for the few, which once made, must irresistibly be carried out. Rev. iii. 5 also presupposes that the names of those that have been determined to eternal life may yet be erased from the book of life. The election that begins its

realization in the calling was based on certain conditions, which, according to chap. xv. 3, can briefly be summarized in a change of heart. This change, although it is worked by the preparatory grace of redemption, really made its appearance only in those who permitted this grace to work in them (chap. xv. 2). But then all further workings of God's grace depends upon this that the faith that has been worked on the basis of the call, which still is one that is worked subjectively, continues. Jesus Himself in His Parable of the vine speaks of disciples, who, because they do not abide in Him, will be cast off and be delivered over to destruction (John xv. 6). He was probably thinking of the case of Judas.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, which was written in a dangerous crisis of the congregation to which it is addressed, and with terrible earnestness warns against hardening and apostasy (Heb. iii. 12-13), proceeds from the supposition that a person who has experienced all the manifestations of grace may nevertheless again fall away. In this case he can then no longer be renewed in heart (vi. 4 sqq.) because there would then be no motives for his return, since the highest possible had proved ineffectual in him, has voluntarily committed that sin of blasphemy for which there is no satisfaction but only a terrible judgment, as the Old Testament has appointed for such sinners (x. 26-31). John, also speaks of such mortal sin, for which there should be no further petition, because such a prayer will no longer be heard (1 John v. 16-17). Without a doubt an apostacy from faith is here meant and the severance of connection with the congregation of the believers. He indeed states that such persons really never belonged to the congregation (ii. 19) and accordingly, had not experienced that grace which is felt in the congregation. But the Epistle to the Hebrews shows that this acceptance is not necessary or universally applicable. But both agree in this, that it is not any weak

lack in the development of Christian life that leads to this mortal sin, but the casting aside of the faith in Christ. Paul also, who has taught the doctrine of election in the most explicit form, yet presupposes that it is possible to receive this grace in vain (2 Cor. vi. 1) and warns against apostasy. He does not consider the Corinthians and the Thessalonians threatened by this danger notwithstanding their heathenish sins, which still prevail among them, since he has the confidence that these will be overcome by the grace that is in them. But he does fear in the case of the Galatians, that they will again subject themselves to the yoke of the law instead of seeking salvation alone in Christ (Gal. v. 1-8); and in the case of the Romans, if they do not abide in the grace but sink back into a false self-confidence (Rom. i. 20 sqq.) At all events, the possibility of a falling away remains, although they were chosen and called.

In this Paul found nothing contradictory. For him it was a self-evident matter on the basis of the Old Testament, that, as was the case with the fulfilment of every promise of God, so the fulfilment of election and calling was based on the conditions under which they were tacitly or explicatedly bestowed. This presupposition, however, he saw in the condition in which the Searcher of hearts finds man, which, however, could be changed in the course of development. But equally certain it was to him, that man remains responsible for his fate, that no arrangement of God for his salvation could take away this responsibility, but could only make it possible for him to meet it. In a time when as a matter of fact many suffered shipwreck in their faith and Christian life, Paul comforted himself with the truth, that in the great community of the congregation, there must be not only golden and silver, but also wooden and earthly vessels, since these were useless and easily broken, that could not be destined for the same purpose as others (2 Tim. ii. 20). He evidently considers only a part of the congre-

gation as elected; but of these he says, that they are the firm foundation that shall remain, no matter how many may fall away. It is highly significant that he finds the guarantee for this not only in the fact that the Lord knows His own, but also therein that everyone who through this calls the Lord his Lord, is obligated to separate himself from evil (2 Tim. ii. 19). Notwithstanding the confidence he has just experienced in the election, he (ii. 21) expressly points out the way by which one may become a vessel as those are who in v. 20 are described as the elect.

It is indeed thought that the religious significance of the doctrine of election is thereby abrogated. Without a doubt Paul in Rom. viii. 28 sqq. bases his hymn on the certainty of salvation on this doctrine; but this seems to become of little moment, as soon as the carrying out of the divine counsel in any way is made dependent on human conduct. But according to the New Testament this is not at all the case. In the call, through which man becomes certain of his election, the promise is contained that God will bring him to the goal that is appointed for him in his election. Upon his faithfulness rests the confidence that He will do everything that will bring him to this goal (1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Thess. v. 24); that He will finish the good work He has begun in him (Phil. i. 6). But this confidence is not awakened in us, that it should lead us to a false certainty. Upon this very fact, that God works in us both to will and to do, that accordingly we cannot excuse ourselves on the ground of our weakness, if that which is necessary for our salvation is not worked in us, Paul bases his admonition to work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. ii. 12-13).

The real tendency of the doctrine of election is accordingly to make every member of the congregation sure that the entire work of redemption that is done in him, from its very beginning, is entirely the product of God's grace, so that Paul can say, Through God's grace I am that I am

(1 Cor. xv. 10). Everyone accordingly is to regard his salvation as a pure work of God's grace, so that none shall boast (Eph. ii. 8-9). Therefore Paul begins almost every one of his epistles with thanksgiving for what the Lord has done in the congregation, by having worked in them faith through the grace of His call (Rom. i. 8; Col. i. 3). In this the change in baptism to infant baptism (chap. xiv. 5) can alter nothing, since this continues to be the pledge of our election. Only that now the call follows through the working of grace, which awakens faith in the sense described in chap. xv. 4 in children of God who have come to Christian consciousness. But the consciousness that our salvation is no work of our own; that our salvation is in no way to be ascribed to our merit, can only be established all the more firmly by this, that the pledge had been given to us in baptism, that we received while yet in a state of unconsciousness. Only thereby the gratitude toward God is aroused in the surest manner, and this is the basis of all correct and religious relations to God.

CHAPTER XVI

FAITH IN REDEMPTION AND THE STATE OF GRACE

1. **The Essence of Faith.**—Faith as the obedient acceptance of the gospel and as the willingness to submit to it in thought and action is not yet the faith that brings salvation; for it only rests on the immediate impression of this word as a divine declaration. This immediate impression must be raised to the conscious conviction and to the confident certainty of this, that what the word declares is the truth. Faith in this sense is not the work of man (2 Thess. iii. 3); it cannot either be proved by demonstration or can a person force himself to accept as truth what the word declares. Only when the gospel is accepted in obedience does this faith grow out of the gospel (Rom. x. 16-17); the gospel itself produces this as the power of God (Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 24). On the other hand, this conviction cannot be produced in anybody who will not permit it. Jesus already says, that he who does not willingly hear the word cannot understand it (John viii. 43), and still less have faith in it as the truth (John x. 25-26). Only those who accept Him willingly believe in His name (John i. 16). In this sense, too, faith is a work (John vi. 29) that God demands, and the fulfilment of a divine command (1 John iii. 23). Paul, too, speaks of the work of faith (1 Thess. i. 3) when it proves itself as permanent in adhering to this conviction, and he admonishes to hold fast to the faith (1 Cor. xvi. 13).

The object of faith, which so often is called by John faith in the name of Christ, is primarily nothing else than

the confident conviction that that is true which His name indicates, namely, that Jesus is the Mediator of redemption. This was connected from the very beginning with His faith in His divine mission (John xvii. 21). In this sense Jesus speaks of faith as such (Mark i. 15; ix. 42). Only after He has been exalted to God does this faith become a faith in Him as the Lord of glory (James v. 1), who would in the near future show Himself as such in His second coming. Also in the case of Paul, who declares faith to be the characteristic mark of Christians as such, nothing also is primarily meant, than this confident conviction of the mediatorship of redemption in Christ, and of the fact upon which this certainty is based, namely, that God has again raised Him who has died for us from the dead (Rom. x. 9; 1 Thess. iv. 14). When the Epistle to the Hebrews formally explains the essence of faith, it mentions first of all the fact that the believer is convinced of invisible things (xi. 1) and undoubtedly refers to the facts of which the entire Epistle speaks, namely, that Christ as our High Priest, who by His sacrifice made once has redeemed us, is exalted to God, in order there to make this sacrifice effective. This Epistle demands the full confidence of conviction in reference to these facts (x. 22). Here is meant then first of all faith in an object of knowledge that is seized with the full conviction of its truth, or faith in the truth (2 Thess. ii. 13; cf. v. 12). But this object is not abstract truths, not doctrines concerning God and divine things, but are the facts in which the revelation of salvation in Christ have taken place. The wisdom, too, which Paul preaches to the advanced Christians, deals entirely with what God through His redemptive counsel has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor. ii. 6-9); and the knowledge which He expects from the advent of the consummation of redemption is a seeing face to face (1 Cor. xiii. 9-17).

Later, also, when Paul through misconceptions in the matter of Christian knowledge in his congregations had been forced to lay greater stress on the development of this knowledge, he states expressly that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ (Col. ii. 2-3). The unity of faith according to Eph. iv. 13 leads to a unity in the full knowledge of the Son of God. But that the apostle here has not in mind any doctrinal statement concerning the metaphysical essence of Jesus, is shown by the connection with Phil. iii. 8. According to this the unity consists in this that we recognize the complete worth of Christ for our redemption, over against which all other things are useless, and even harmful, because they prevent us from appropriating Christ as our highest good. Especially in the Pastoral Epistles Paul emphasizes the fact again and again, that the knowledge of the truth does not in any sense consist in theosophical speculation, but in the fact that Christ is the Mediator of salvation (1 Tim. ii. 4 sqq.). This knowledge of the truth is alone in accordance with godliness (Tit. i. 1; cf. 1 Tim. vi. 3), i. e., is such as the godly seek and love. In 2 Pet. iii. 18 the knowledge of Christ is nothing but the knowledge of the glorious promises that have been given us in Him (i. 3-4). In the most emphatic manner the inner connection between knowledge and faith is brought out by John. Faith presupposes knowledge (1 John iv. 16; John xviii. 8), in so far as the latter is merely the confident conviction of a recognized truth; but a higher stage of knowledge can be reached only when that which is known is also appropriated in faith (1 John vi. 69; x. 38). In John also the contents of this knowledge is not at all a doctrine concerning Christ and His divine being; for the opponents whom He antagonizes also speak of a heavenly God-like Christ. The proposition that He maintains over against them is, that this Christ has appeared in the flesh (1 John iv. 2; 2 John vii.), i. e., the

historical fact of the complete revelation of God in the man Jesus. The fact that we see in Him, i. e., in His historical activity, the Father, is the one thing that Christ at all times and occasions demands that we believe (John x. 38; xiv. 10).

Now in this confident conviction of these redemptive facts there is already always contained the factor of confidence, as these are only accepted because we are confident that that is true which Jesus has said concerning Himself and the apostles have taught of Him. But as this does not consist in a doctrine concerning His person, but in the announcement of the salvation that has appeared in Him, then faith necessarily becomes a confidence in this salvation. Only in this way is faith made perfect as the determining influence of our whole religious life. If the conviction of the divine revelation in Christ is primarily only the satisfaction of our God-seeking striving for knowledge, then the confidence in the grace of God declared in the gospel becomes the effective support for all religious life and moral endeavours. For that reason these two elements appear together throughout the New Testament. Only in the case of John is the second, in accordance with the peculiarity of his religious life, left quite in the background. Even in the case of James the conviction of the glory of the exalted Christ goes hand in hand (ii. 1) with the trust in God (i. 3, 6), which characterized the Old Testament godliness too, and does not yet need a reference to Christ. All the more strongly is the second element emphasized by Paul, who especially in his struggle with the Judaists was compelled to make very prominent that this trust in redemption, which is based on Christ and His redemptive work (Rom. ix. 33; Gal. iii. 26) is the opposite to all works (Gal. iii. 2, 5; Rom. ix. 32) and to all human achievements (Rom. x. 5). It is rather a renunciation of all merit or service of self, an exclusive dependence on the

grace of God. Of this trust in redemption, too, it can be said what has been stated concerning a conviction, that it cannot be the subject of a command because one person cannot force another to have confidence in a third. Confidence can be awakened only by conduct, and the gospel has the power to awaken this confidence in God in us. On the other hand, it must be said here, too, that this confidence can be worked only in him who is willing to be influenced by the word, just as the conviction of the truth of the word can be awakened only in him who receives it as the word of God. But while faith from this point of view is something that grows, appropriating at all times new phases of the message of redemption, this is not the case when considered from the other. Every element of self-confidence or of work-righteousness absolutely destroys the dependence in the grace of God given us in Christ (Gal. v. 4).

It is found in the whole religious peculiarity of Paul (cf. chap. i. 5), that he refers this confidence in redemption entirely to the salvation that has already been achieved; but naturally it can be referred also to that which is promised and is yet to come, as this is everywhere done by Peter (1 Pet. i. 5; vii. 9; cf. 2 Pet. i. 1, 5), so that it is ever said in 1 Pet. i. 21 that faith is also hope. More definitely the Epistle to the Hebrews looks upon faith as a state of the heart, without which the specifically New Testament covenant duty, the holding fast to the hope of the fulfilment of the Old Testament covenant promises now about to be realized in the completed work of redemption, cannot be fulfilled (x. 31-36). Without the confident trust in this that God will realize these promises through His Messiah, there naturally can be no hope of their realization. Therefore, in Heb. xi. 1, the other side of faith is called the confidence in the things hoped for. It is of fundamental importance for the understanding of the religion of the

New Testament, in which faith is everywhere declared to be the foundation of the realization of salvation, that the essence of this faith consists of these two elements, the being convinced of something and the confidence in this, and only of these two. All other works, which generally are based on a mixture of the conditions and the consequences of faith with faith itself, are without reason and only confuse and dull the biblical statements.

2. **Salvation by Faith.**—Everything that the believer in Christ receives is summed up by the apostolic benedictions in the one conception of salvation, which God's grace has prepared for us through Christ; for this is the original sense of the word (Greek, *εἰρήνη*; Heb., Shalom), which is translated with the term "peace" (Rom. i. 7; 1 Pet. i. 2; 2 John iii.; Rev. i. 4). But as the nature of faith can be understood from different sides, so too the nature of salvation. It lies in the eschatological tendency of primitive Christianity, which we become acquainted with in chap. i. 5, that at that time faith was understood chiefly in the sense of a trust in the fulfilment of redemption guaranteed by the Messiah. In the redemption He has effected in them the certainty of this, as this is grasped already in hope and as present in idea. When Jesus is exalted as the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, who had been promised for the Messianic times, is poured out, then the beginning of this era of redemption has been inaugurated (Acts ii. 17 sqq.; iii. 24). The appearance of the Saviour is identical with the last times predicted by the prophets (1 Pet. i. 18 sqq.). The last days are already here (James v. 3); only the final close is yet lacking (1 Pet. i. 5), the last day (John vi. 39-40), the last hour of which is at hand (1 John ii. 18). It is the fundamental idea of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the Messianic period has been inaugurated by the establishment of the new covenant and the sacrificial death of Christ (Heb. ii. 5); the believer already tastes its powers

(vi. 5) and possesses its good things (ix. 11; x. 1). He knows that he is already the possessor of the kingdom (James ii. 5), of eternal life and its blessedness (1 Pet. iii. 7, 14). In his faith in the still invisible but soon to be revealed Messiah he rejoices in all afflictions with a joy that is already purified by the light of the coming glory (1 Pet. i. 8). In the Holy Ghost this glory already rests upon him (1 Pet. iv. 14).

But this hope of primitive Christianity is by no means an empty and unpracticable enthusiasm. It was self-evident to these pious Israelites, that the realization of redemption could come only when the ideal of religion had been realized in the people, or at any rate in the believing portion. It had been the purpose of the whole life of Christ to realize this ideal, and thus in the present kingdom to guarantee the certainty of the future kingdom through the resurrection of Christ. Those who in faith had become certain of the kingdom, were regenerated unto a living hope, i. e., a hope definitely directed the entire life (1 Pet. i. 3). Accordingly the entire first Epistle of Peter bases its admonitions on this motive, which is also frequently emphasized in other portions of the New Testament (cf. 2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 John iii. 3); but never has the fundamental importance that is assigned to it in Peter (1 Pet. i. 13; ii. 11; iii. 7; v. 5). There yet remains the fuller realization of the ideal that had been set up before Israel for the Messianic period, which had already been begun in the congregation of the believers (1 Pet. ii. 9). The holy people, the people of His possession must naturally be holy in its walk as He is holy, who has called it (1 Pet. i. 15). According to 2 Pet. i. 3-4 also, in the appeal for the reception of the promises, everything is given that belongs to a true life of godliness, whereby the divine nature, i. e., sanctification is worked in us. Therefore there is need only of a reference to this, that and how all Christian virtues must

appear where there is full righteousness. It had been deeply impressed upon every son of Israel, and upon Paul, too, that the completion of redemption, the life, could only appear where there is full righteousness. Jesus already promised to realize this in the present Kingdom of God (Matt. v. 6). This righteousness consists in the fulfilment of all the divine commandments (Deut. vi. 75), in the works that correspond to the norm-giving will of God. The question accordingly arises, if this gift of redemption too is given in and with faith.

James was the first to express himself fully on this question. We must remember in this connection, that for him faith was the conviction that Jesus is the Lord of glory i. e., the Messiah, who would in the near future return again (James ii. 1; v. 8). But because He had in His earthly career taught the complete fulfilment of the will of God, and for this reason the preaching concerning Christ was primarily a perfect law (i. 25), He will come as Judge (v. 9), who will ask, if this will of God has been fulfilled; for upon this it depends whether we will be delivered from destruction and participate in the salvation He has brought (iv. 14). Then it is easily understood, how James regards it as self-evident, that this conviction alone cannot save (ii. 14), unless faith through works also shows itself to be a living, active power (ii. 18); for that a dead (ii. 17, 26) ineffective (ii. 20) faith will be worthless in the presence of the coming Lord, he knew from Matt. vii. 21. But the Judge can declare him only as just, i. e., well-pleasing in the sight of God, whose faith has helped his works to make it possible for him to attain its perfection and thereby to secure the declaration that he is just. On the other hand, faith attains from these works that it produces to a perfect state, which can be found only in the faith that is vital and active (James ii. 22). Man can not be declared just on account of faith alone but only on account of works

which faith produces (ii. 24). This then is the salvation that James finds in faith; because this faith became the strongest possible motive for the fulfilment of God's will to be found, and necessarily produces works that can make us capable of being declared just before God and thus attains the complete redemption. It could not occur to him to think further of the imperfections that still cling to our works, since the hearing of the prayer of the believer for the forgiveness of sins was a fixed fact for him, even without his thinking, as little as Jesus does in the Lord's Prayer, that this was realized through the atoning death of the Lord (James v. 15-16).

It is singular that it is regarded as the peculiar doctrine of Paul that good works are the fruits of faith. Again and again appeal is made to individual passages in the larger letters of Paul (Gal. v. 6) according to which it is claimed love is the fruit of faith, although according to Gal. v. 22, love is directly declared to be the first fruit of the Spirit (cf. Rom. xv. 30). But the connection of the former passage clearly shows that faith is active only in the communion of life with Christ that is effected through the Spirit (v. 5). It was rather Paul who declares that our righteousness, at all times imperfect, can not secure for us the possession of redemption, even if through faith in Christ a new motive has been given for the fulfilment of the law. It is expressly stated in Gal. ii. 16, that, if it is conceded that without faith righteousness cannot be achieved, we must go further and recognize that the declaration of righteousness in general is given on the basis of faith and not on account of our imperfect works. In this case faith is no longer merely the conviction of the truth of the facts of redemption, but is confidence in the salvation that Christ has achieved. From this idea of faith Paul proceeds to regard righteousness as the free gift of God (Rom. v. 17), as one that God has given (Rom. i. 17; x. 3), as it is given

to the sinner without his deeds, through grace, on the basis of the salvation achieved through Christ (Rom. iii. 26; cf. Gal. ii. 17; 2 Cor. v. 21). This righteousness then is secured only through faith (Rom. iii. 22) to the exclusion of all works or merits (Rom. iii. 28-30); the very opposite of which in the sole dependence upon divine grace characteristic of faith. Paul says nothing of attributing the merits of Christ to us, but only of an imputing of righteousness, which is identical with not imputing sin (Rom. iv. 6 sqq.). When it is said that to him who trusts in God who declares the unjust just, his faith is counted for righteousness (Rom. iv. 5), this is not meant to say that faith in the place of all the fulfilment of the law, is the only service that makes us pleasing in the sight of God; since faith, which the gospel alone works in us, is not a work of our own. Just as little does God count faith to us for righteousness for the reason that He sees in faith the active germs and thereby the guarantee of a complete righteousness, as James ii. 23 interprets Gen. xv. 6. For in this case justification would not be an act of grace, which according to Rom. iii. 24 (cf. iv. 4) it must be, but the act of a wise, even if of a foreseeing justice. The Pauline doctrine of justification by faith alone is at heart nothing else than the fundamental thought of Christ's preaching, according to which God does not wait until the people have repented, but offers them forgiveness of sin and salvation in order to convert and to regenerate them. Thus, too, in Paul God does not wait with His sentence of justification until man earns it through his work, however imperfect, but He gives it to him as a gift of His free grace.

This doctrine is by no means specifically a Pauline teaching. The Epistle to the Hebrews also proceeds from the basis, that it is impossible to please God without faith (xi. 6), only that this letter, on the basis of the original sense of Gen. xv. 6 considers faith as the fundamental state

of heart through which man is made righteous (Heb. xi. 4-7). The fact, however, remains that man cannot be perfect, as Christ became perfect through His obedience that had been proved through His sufferings (v. 8-9; vii. 28; cf. ii. 10). For this reason God established the Old Testament institution of atonement, which through the removal of the guilt of sin was to make man perfect. But as this had only prefigure significance it could for this reason in itself not bring about this perfection for the sin-laden conscience of those who sacrificed (ix. 9; x. 1), but could only point to Him, who, through His sacrifice offered once for all, could cover the sins in the eyes of God and accomplish this (x. 14). Naturally he alone can take part in the new covenant that was established by this sacrifice who clings to the hope of the fulfilment of the promises in this covenant. But as this is possible only through faith, it is evident here, too, that only the believer can attain that perfection that substantially is identical with the righteousness taught by Paul. Only that the former Pharisee proceeds from the idea of righteousness as the fulfilment of the law, while the Levitical author of the Epistle to the Hebrews goes out from the idea of the perfection which already in the Old Testament could be secured only through the atonement sacrifice. But the foundation of both is the idea that salvation is conditioned on the establishment of a state fully pleasing to God and that man cannot attain this through his own exertions. But while the Epistle to the Hebrews is content in teaching that man attains this when the sacrificial death of Jesus frees him from sin, Paul goes further and states, that on this ground God out of grace declares him just. Of course this applies only to the believer in whom God Himself through His message of redemption has worked implicit confidence in his grace in Christ.

Paul emphasizes the fact that this new order of justification, which, as he himself proves by his interpretation

of Gen. xv. 6, was already prefigured in the story of Abraham, in the only one that satisfies the religious consciousness because it excludes the possibility of human boasting (Rom. iii. 27-28). In this way the normal relation of man to God is restored, who is to receive redemption solely from the hand of God and not in any way earn or merit it. In this certainty of salvation, which depends entirely and exclusively on the grace of God, the religious ideal has been realized, and thereby alone have the conditions been fulfilled for a realization of the moral ideal. The latter, too, man cannot achieve through his own powers but only through the grace that the spirit of God gives. But as Jesus already taught, that man can secure nothing from God except through faith (Mark xi. 24; cf. James i. 7), i. e., without trust in His grace, thus too it is only the believer who is sure of all other manifestations and gifts of the grace of God to the final perfection of salvation. Only he who seeks for dogmatical propositions in the Scriptures can find a contradiction between Paul and James. He who sees in them the evidences how the revelation of redemption in Christ in different stages of Christian life realizes this redemption in the believers, will praise God who has thus satisfied the different religious needs in the same way.

But there is also another form in which the believer can find the certainty that he possesses redemption. If faith consists essentially in the conviction that Christ is the highest revelation of God, if he sees the Father in the Son, then the goal to which religion would lead is realized in faith immediately (chap. i. 5). The knowledge of God which is given through Christ is for John eternal life (John xvii. 3). The highest good that is to be realized in eternal life is nothing else than seeing God, the immediate communion with God. This seeing of God begins for the believer in Christ, when he has learned to know that he sees the

Father in the Son (John xiv. 9). Judgment is no longer needed to decide in his case whether he is to attain life, for he has this life already and has passed through death to life (John v. 24). In this the need of deliverance from sin is not excluded but included; for only he who is free from sin can see God (Matt. v. 8); but the believer has been made free from sin through the blood of Christ (1 John i. 7). Life presupposes deliverance from death of which man on account of his guilt of sin was the victim; but Jesus gives His life unto death for the life of the world (John vi. 51), and this very act of entering death is the highest revelation of the love of God that has secured life for us (John iii. 16). In the life that the believer has as such the full communion with God is realized. Just as faith, which is at the same time the highest knowledge of God, is also certain that the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father (John x. 38; xiv. 10), thus, too, the believer centres his whole being, together with his thoughts and mind, on the Son, in whom he sees the Father and thereby the Father Himself (1 John ii. 24). As a consequence Christ remains in him (John xv. 4); and as the Father is always in the Son, the Father, too, remains in Him (1 John iii. 24) as the presence of His spirit within us constantly shows (John iv. 13). It is expressly stated, that abiding in the Son and in the Father is the eternal life which the Father has promised us, and that this depends entirely upon our abiding in the proclamation of the gospel in us, i. e., of faith (John ii. 24-25).

As the oneness of the Son and the Father is found in their mutual inter-relation (John x. 30, 38), which is at the same time the being of the Father and the Son in the believers, thus, too, is the unity of these with the Father and the Son (John xvii. 21) the perfect communion with God (1 John i. 6; cf. v. 3). This mystical relation is the highest realization of religion. For the knowledge of this, which

is eternal life, is not to be taken as something merely theoretical but as a centering of the whole heart and soul upon God. This being in God could in itself be also a contemplative seeing, an indulgence in the enjoyment of God; but as it is always connected with God's being in us, this mystical relation is at the same time also a going over of God's being into us, which determines practically our whole being. As the Joannine mysticism excludes all pantheistic mingling between the Creator and the creation by the fact that the being in God is always brought about only through the being and the abiding of the historical Christ in the believers, it can never become quietistic or antinomic. A communion with God or a knowledge of God which is considered possible in conjunction with sin, is self deception and even a lie (1 John i. 6; ii. 4; iii. 6), and doing evil is incompatible with seeing God (3 John xi.; cf. 1 John iv. 8).

3. **The State of Sonship of God.**—The new relation into which the disciples enter in the Kingdom of God is called by Christ the sonship of God (xi. 1). If this idea is less prominent in the preaching of the first apostles, the reason for this is to be found in the fact that this was nothing specifically new for the pious Israelite. Even if the fatherly love of God in the old covenant primarily applied to the nation as a whole, yet the Israelites felt it more and more in the course of time that the pious alone were the real members of the nation and therefore they applied this love to them (Ps. ciii. 13). That God gives mercy to the humble appears in James iv. 6 only from one statement from Prov. iii. 34; the giving as well as the forgiving goodness of God (James i. 17; v. 15) is a self-evident matter for the pious Israelites. The certainty that prayer would be heard is founded on Old Testament examples (James v. 16 sqq.); not even the exhortation to consider affliction, because it is a profitable trial, as a pure

joy (James i. 2-3) requires a specifically Christian motive. It is indeed made prominent in 1 Pet. i. 17 that the believers appeal to God as their Father, because they have been called to be His children (v. xiv. 15); but the exhortation to trust God, which overcomes all troubles (iv. 19; v. 7) as also the statement that suffering is a wholesome trial (i. 6-7; iv. 12) is not yet made dependent on this. On the other hand, it is here strongly emphasized that the grace of God is bestowed on the believing congregation (ii. 10) and that also the divine mercy, which is offered to them in the manifestation of Christ (through the gospel) i. 13, and is constantly increased (i. 2) gives them all grace (iii. 7; iv. 10; v. 10). In the Epistle to the Hebrews the new relation between the believer and God is described entirely in the Old Testament form of a communion with Him, as this was prophesied by Jer. xxxi. 31 sqq. concerning the new covenant (ix. 6 sqq.), of which covenant Jesus already speaks in Mark xiv. 24, and which idea is touched upon by Paul only in Rom. xi. 27, and 2 Cor. iii. 6. This covenant is established by the death of Christ as the Mediator (Heb. ix. 15; xiii. 20; cf. 1 Pet. i. 2). In it we have access to the throne of divine grace (Heb. x. 19-20), where the adherents of the covenant at all times find mercy and grace (iv. 16), which make the heart strong, and ever bestow upon them and deck them with the gifts of grace (xiii. 9, 25; x. 29) as long as they do not turn from it (xii. 15). Here the believing Israel is described as a family of God, as was that in the Old Testament (iii. 6) the members of which are the sons of God and the brothers of Christ (ii. 10-11). Here suffering is explicitly declared to be a part of the education by the Father (xii. 8-9), but this, too, only on the basis of an Old Testament citation (Prov. iii. 11-12).

Paul, too, speaks of the advantage of Israel in being the children of God (Rom. ix. 4); but as long as the heir is a

child he is not essentially different from a house-slave (Gal. iv. 1-2). Only through faith have all, Jews and Gentiles, become full sons of God (iii. 26 sqq.), a family of God (Eph. iv. 19; 1 Tim. iii. 15). Just as justification, thus, too, adoption, which is intimately connected with it, is regarded as a juridic act, in which God adopts as His children those who in themselves in nowise were such (Gal. iv. 5, and Eph. i. 5). Now they have become the beloved of God (Rom. i. 7; Col. iii. 12), who at all times have access to the Father (Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12) and can in child-like faith call Him Father (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 15). In this way the adoption to childhood realizes just as is done in the teachings of Jesus (chap. xi. 2), the ideal of religious life. Only in this way is the position of the believer over against the trials of suffering put upon a Christian foundation. Because in justification, which is bestowed upon us on account of faith, we have entered into the relationship of peace with God and thereby upon the state of grace (Rom. v. 1-2), therefore sufferings that fall to our lot cannot cause us to cast aside the faith that has brought to us this highest good. These can work in us only patience, in which faith is proved, and make us all the more certain of the completion of redemption (v. 3-4). In faith we have the inner peace of soul and the joy (xv. 13) which is the characteristic state of the Christian heart and cannot be lost amid all the sufferings of life (2 Cor. vi. 10; viii. 2; Phil. iv. 4).

But of this gracious adoption as children we can in the nature of the case know nothing unless the spirit of this adoption has been given to us, through which we learn to appeal to the Father as children (Rom. v. 18). He it is that first awakens in us joy and peace (Gal. v. 22); for through Him the love of God is poured out into our hearts (Rom. v. 5), i. e., has become the object of our consciousness. Just as in the preaching of Jesus, the inner experi-

ence of the grace of God compels us to imitate His actions to us in our dealings with others (chap. xi. 2), thus, according to Paul, the Spirit that assures us of our adoption is at the same time the impulse to a new life (Gal. v. 18; cf. chap. xiii. 4). Therefore, too, in connection with our new spiritual life, in which we call upon God as our Father (Rom. viii. 15) the objective Spirit, that works within us and urges us on (v. 14) testifies to us that we are the children of God (v. 16), since only the children of God in their conduct can be like unto Him. Not as though we become the children of God only through becoming like unto God through this spirit, whereby, since this likeness to God is never perfect but only begun, all certainty of our state of grace would be undermined, and the adoption to the state of being the children of God would then not be an act of God's grace, but the fruit of our own conduct. But rather, because on the basis of the act of grace on God's part we have been adopted as his children, God has sent into our hearts the spirit of His Son (Gal. iv. 6). Here again we find the fundamental thought of Christ's preaching, according to which we become the children of God in the Kingdom of God, and only because we are such, we feel impelled to become like unto Him (Matt. v. 45).

This is made particularly prominent by John. According to him the love of God, which He has shown to us in the sending of His Son, and from which we are first to learn what it means to love (1 John iv. 10), is made perfect in this, that God Himself abides in us (1 John iv. 12). As this presupposes that we remain in Him, it is the mystical relation with God that has been established by the seeing of God, in which John sees the specific possession of redemption and therefore too the completed realization of divine love in the believers. This love is in this case also the fatherly love of God (1 John iii. 1) whom we have learned in Christ to know as our Father (ii. 13). But

Jesus has already said in John, that when His work would be finally completed in His return after the resurrection, there would be no further use of this picture, because then He could without picture or proverb reveal this love to them (John xvi. 25). Accordingly in John it is the confidence in God Himself, whose love has been perfectly revealed to us, which proves itself in the fact that our prayers are heard (1 John iii. 21; v. 14-15). But only in John in consequence of this mystical vital union with God does this new relationship into which the believer enters with his God, become a *mutual* relation of love. For it belongs to the essence of love that one lives entirely in the other, and the other so completely fills the first, that he is determined in his thought and actions only through Him. But the typical being of the Son in the Father and of the Father in the Son was such a revelation of love; for the Father loved the Son from eternity (John xvii. 23-24, 26), and the Son loves the Father (John xiv. 31). The life communion of the disciples with Him, which was the basis of their communion with God (xv. 4) Jesus also regards as a relation of love. He has loved them as the Father has loved Him (xv. 9) and as they love Him (xiv. 21). Thus then in the new state of salvation the love of God is recognized as being in Him (1 John ii. 5). Since His love toward us is only perfected in His being in us (iv. 17), we recognize His love, which He has realized in our hearts (John xvii. 26), entirely only in this, that His being, recognized as love, now passes over to us also. Whosoever dwells in love abides in God and God abides in him (1 John iv. 16). Only in this do we recognize that love becomes perfect in the believing congregation (iv. 17). This love, which by its nature is both a love for God and a love for the brethren (iv. 20-21; v. 1), in consequence of the highest manifestations of God's love is made perfect in us. Paul already says, that the love of

God can be known only if we experience, that by His dwelling in us our love constantly grows, until at last we are entirely filled with the fulness of God's love (Eph. iii. 19). As Jesus says that the true descent from Abraham can be recognized by the fact that we do the works of Abraham, and the fact that men are the children of the Devil by this, that they carry out the devilish desires (John viii. 39, 44), thus in the state of being the children of God the essential likeness to God is established in us (cf. Matt. v. 45). To those who have accepted Christ in faith, He has given the authority (John i. 12) to become the children of God, in this sense, and we, says John triumphantly, are these (1 John iii. 1). Just at the highest development of Joannine thought, where religion is realized in the most complete vital communion with God, this mystical union becomes the potent source of a new God-like life. No distinction is any more made between an adoption based on grace and the conduct of children effected through grace; but the new state of adoption is in its very nature itself a state of being similar to God. How this state is brought about will be seen in chap xvii. 1.

4. **The State of Servant of God.**—If the adoption to childhood is realized in the Kingdom of God, then in its nature it is always the communion in which the supremacy of God becomes the sole determining factor, and all the members become the subjects of God, who are obligated to obey His will exclusively. If the Kingdom of God is, on account of the complete redemption that is given in it, by virtue of the adoption, the highest good for the acquisition of which we must be ready to sacrifice everything (Matt. xiii. 44-45), then, too, the fulfilment of the will of God in this kingdom, for which we pray (Matt. vi. 10), is that for which we are in duty bound to strive (Luke xii. 31). In the Theocracy of Israel the typical realization of this ideal had already been begun, in so far

as God had chosen this nation as His peculiar people (Deut. vii. 6), which was obligated to serve Him alone. It is true that rebellious Israel had forfeited the right to this honor (Hos. ii. 25); but the congregation of believers from Israel has again been made the chosen race (1 Pet. ii. 9-10), the people of God, as the Church is called everywhere else in the New Testament (Heb. viii. 10, after Jer. xxxi. 32; 2 Cor. vi. 16, after Lev. xxvi. 11-12; Rev. xviii. 4, after Jer. li. 45). When viewed from the standpoint of a prophetic picture they are called the fold of God (1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 2; cf. Heb. xiii. 20).

As the people that in a specific sense belong to God, Israel was to be the holy nation (Ex. xix. 6), and the congregation of believers out of Israel has become such (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9). As in the Old Testament every first born was dedicated to the service of the Lord (Rom. xi. 16), thus, too, the believers have been selected as the first fruits (2 Thess. ii. 13; cf. James i. 18; Apoc. xiv. 4). Therefore in the Epistles of Paul, in Hebrews, in the Apocalypse, the members of the congregation are all called saints. But as nothing unclean can be dedicated to the service of God, it was necessary that they first be cleansed from the pollution of their sins through the blood of an atoning sacrifice (Heb. ix. 13-14); that they be consecrated (xiii. 12; cf. x. 10, 14), for which purposes Christ had given Himself up as a sacrifice (John xvii. 19). Thus, too, God can accept none in His service whom He has not Himself prepared; for which reason He through baptism gives the believers His spirit, and for this reason baptism is designated as dedication by the Spirit (1 Pet. i. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 13). As the Spirit transfers them into the living communion with Christ, they are saints and consecrated to God in Christ (1 Cor. i. 2; Phil. i. 1), or in the Holy Ghost (Rom. xv. 16). But there was a special class in Israel that was to realize in a typical manner the ideal that was held out to the whole

people, namely, the priesthood. But this ideal, too, was realized entirely only in the congregation of the believers. Therefore they are the priests of God (Rev. i. 6), a holy priesthood serving their heavenly King (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9), who because they have been cleansed from all pollution of guilt (Heb. x. 19-20) come near to God (1 Pet. iii. 18) and were permitted to bring offerings to Him (ii. 5). Their sacrifices are their prayers (Rev. v. 8; viii. 3-4) and their works of love (Heb. xiii. 15) and all of their deeds that are pleasing to God are a service of God (Rom. xii. 1; Phil. iii. 3). This is the Biblical idea of the universal priesthood of the believers. This does not bring with it special prerogatives, but only a great advantage, but one that at the same time includes duties that involve the whole life. In the conception of the covenant relation that prevails in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the same double relationship is also contained. In the covenant which God has made with Israel, and which on the basis of the blood of Christ has been renewed with the congregation of believers (Mark xiv. 24) God obligates Himself just as much to bless the people as the people obligate themselves to obey Him. He makes the business of the people His own, just as the people make God's business their own.

The specific expression for this other side of the state of grace is the servitude of God. As the revelation of the Father to the Son becomes the parabolic picture of the love relation into which God enters over against the congregation of believers, thus the relation of the Master to the servant becomes the picture of the absolute and unconditional dependence in which the faithful stand to God. In itself this is not in conflict with the sonship; for the Son also must be obedient (1 Pet. i. 14) and is obligated to serve the Father (Luke xv. 29; Matt. xxi. 28). But the duty of unconditional service is inherent in the idea of a servant. It lies in the nature of servitude that

no one can serve two masters (Mark vi. 24). Here, too, the idea is not that of the natural relation of dependence of man on God. Israel was the servant of God in their capacity as a chosen people (Is. xli. 8, 9; xlvi. 2), as His Son. Only it must be remembered here, that what in the Old Covenant Israel was only as a nation, in the New Covenant all the individuals are, who through a voluntary entrance into the congregation have also entered upon this state of servitude. For this reason Jesus in the parable tells us that the Lord of the vineyard goes out to hire voluntary workmen (Mark xx. 1 sqq.); and according to Matt. xxi. 33 also the workingmen in the vineyard have been hired. But after they have once entered upon this arrangement they are now bound unconditionally as are the slaves. As such Jesus repeatedly describes His disciples (Matt. xviii. 23; Luke vii. 7), and the designation of the believers as the servants of God is especially frequent in the earliest apostolic preaching (Acts iv. 29; 1 Pet. ii. 16; Rev. vii. 3; xix. 2, 5).

However much Paul regards the adoption as children as that which is new in Christianity, yet the believers according to his teachings also are the servants of God (Rom. vi. 22), which is in vi. 16 emphasized over against all other servitude, as this is done in Matt. vi. 24; and is also found in 1 Cor. vii. 23; or, what is in substance the same, they are called the servants of Christ (vii. 22). Very frequently the apostle calls himself and his co-workers the servants or slaves of Christ (Rom. i. 1; Phil. i. 1), or, after the manner of the Old Testament, slaves of God (Tit. i. 1; cf. James i. 1) in so far as they have made His special service their life's work; but according to 1 Cor. xii. 5 all Christians serve God, each with his own gift. As Paul in 1 Cor. iv. 1-2 calls himself a steward, thus Jesus compared all of His disciples with stewards (Matt. xxv. 14 sqq.; cf. 1 Pet. iv. 10). In this way the relation of servitude

becomes for each the expression of the consciousness of his calling for every individual, by virtue of which each is called upon, according to his gifts or state, to render his life as a service to God in the congregation of believers. This is merely the other side of the realization of the religious ideal. The unconditional confidence in God is accompanied by an unconditional feeling of obligation; only that this phase, since God's will also regulates our conduct toward men, leads at the same time to a realization of the ethical ideal. Even John, who directly calls the state of redemption a relation of love, yet everywhere presupposes that love cannot satisfy itself unless it does everything that the beloved one demands. As Jesus out of love does everything that the Father directs (John xiv. 31), thus, too, He loves those only who keep His commandments (xiv. 15-21), and is for this reason loved by them as He is by the Father (xv. 10). In keeping the commandments, which according to Revelation is a mark of the servants of God (xii. 17; xiv. 12), the love of God is made perfect, according to 1 John ii. 5. This is a mark of the continual communion with God (iii. 24), which in its essence is a relation of love. This idea is characteristic of John, who alone in the New Testament discusses extensively the love of God, that, as God's love is constantly in a self-sacrificing manner active for our good, our love toward Him does not consist merely in a vague feeling or the desire for Him, but in keeping His commandments (v. 3), i. e., in the subjection of our wills and interests and in living exclusively for God and His service. Nothing else is demanded in the condition of servitude to God.

But this brings with it a grave responsibility, which is constantly accompanied by the fear that it will not be met. For this reason the fear of God is a characteristic feature of all the servants of God (1 Pet. ii. 16-17; cf.

Rev. xi. 18; Acts ix. 31). Jesus already demands that this fear should drive away all other (Matt. x. 28); and the sanctification of the name of God, for which He prays (vi. 9), according to 1 Pet. iii. 14, presupposes this fear, which is the opposite of all fear of men. Peter i. 17 expressly emphasizes the fact that the consciousness of being the children of God cannot cast out the fear of the just Judge. It is altogether a mistake when the religion of the New Testament is placed in contrast to that of the Old, in which latter, the fear of God is thought to prevail. It is true that perfect love excludes fear (1 John iv. 18); but as long as we are yet in the process of development in this love, we cannot and should not be without the fear of God. What Paul places over against the childlike trust, with which we appeal to a Father's love, is the fear that prevailed over his readers in the time when they were yet Gentiles, when they were threatened at all times by the vengeance of their gods (Rom. viii. 15). He knows full well the fear of God, whom he is to serve (2 Cor. v. 11) and he perfects the work of self-purification in the fear of God, which has been commanded him (vii. 1). He exhorts them to work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. ii. 12), as he himself with fear approaches the task assigned him by the Lord (1 Cor. ii. 3). It is a matter of the highest significance, which is generally overlooked, that the state of grace includes not only the consciousness of being the children of God but also the consciousness of duty in the service of God.

5. The Inheritance and the Reward.—The peculiarity of these two phases of the state of grace is brought out most prominently in the manner in which its goal, namely, the completion of redemption, appears as guaranteed in it. In itself already, often, according to Old Testament model (cf. Acts vii. 5; Heb. xi. 8) this is described as the eternal and imperishable possession set apart for

us (1 Pet. i. 4; Heb. ix. 15). Even where there is no thought of the adoption, the Scriptures often speak of the inheritance of the Kingdom of God (Matt. xxv. 34; 1 Cor. vi. 9-10) or of eternal life in Him (Mark x. 17; Luke x. 25; cf. 1 Pet. iii. 7). Now, however, it is generally the case among men that the possession intended for the son is his inheritance. If then we have become the children of God, then too are we the heirs (Gal. iv. 7; Rom. viii. 17), i. e., the possession of all of the goods of our Heavenly Father is in store for us. The Spirit who makes us sure of this adoption, is the pledge of this inheritance (2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; cf. Eph. i. 14) in this, that He teaches us to recognize the love of God in all His dealing for our salvation so far, and guarantees to us that our salvation will be completed (Rom. v. 5-11). Indeed, He Himself is the first of the gifts of God, who gives us the assurance that we shall also enjoy the consummation (viii. 23). Since according to the law of Israel only the first born was heir (cf. Heb. xii. 16), in xii. 23 those who are to participate in the completion of redemption are called the first born. Only through the entrance upon this heavenly inheritance they become sons in the fullest sense (Rev. xxi. 3, 7), so that even Paul, who is so fond of describing the present state of grace as that of adoption, sees in 2 Sam. vii. 14 (cf. 2 Cor. vi. 18) a promise also for the future, from which he expects the full adoption to the sonship of God (Rom. viii. 23; cf. v. 29).

When regarded from the standpoint of the consciousness of servitude, the promised completion of redemption has another aspect, in so far as the servant can expect pay. Here there is no thought of one who has been born a slave or has become such against his will, since, as we have seen, in the new covenant the individual enters the congregation and thereby also the state of service of God by a voluntary act. Hence this state appears at all times

as one in which the servant of God can expect the pay that has been promised him and which he has been working for. The parable in Luke xvii. 7-10 also, which still proceeds entirely from the standpoint of servitude in the ancient nations, has not at all the purpose to deny to the disciples the right of asking for such pay. Here the object is to show that the slave, who himself and all that he has belongs to his Master, can never render more than his duty demands, and hence cannot expect to be thanked for the fulfilment of his duty (v. 9). But the furnishing of the daily support of the servant that is found in the very relation of servitude (v. 8) is in no wise denied him. Jesus presupposes that His disciples expect wages and only discusses the question how these can be secured in a proper way (Matt. v. 46; vi. 1). With these He, however, does not mean only the inner satisfaction, which every truly God-pleasing action brings itself, although according to James i. 25 this, too, belongs fundamentally to the certainty of the attainment of the heavenly goal (v. 12). Jesus speaks particularly of a reward that we possess in heaven (Matt. v. 12), and which, as it were, is there collected for us for the day of the consummation (vi. 20). Frequently He emphasizes in gnostic contrast the actual relation of this pay to the service (cf. e. g., Matt. v. 7; x. 32-33) and even illustrates this in the parable by a picture that surpasses the boundaries of all ordinary reality (Luke xii. 37). And when on the other hand the unmeasured greatness of this pay is emphasized (Matt. xix. 29; Luke vi. 30) this seeming contradiction is solved by this, that the equality is regarded not quantitatively but qualitatively. In fact the pay is only one and the same, that which the Lord gives from free grace to all whom He has hired for service in His vineyard, whether they have done much or little (xx. 1-16), namely, eternal life (xix. 29) in the consummation of the Kingdom of God. But as every really

useful service consists only in the striving for the supremacy of God, i. e., seeking His righteousness (Luke vi. 33) the pay is not something foreign to the service but is only the full realization of what the service aims to secure; and there is accordingly a perfect equivalent relation between the two. In so far, on the other hand, as the realization of the rule of God in the consummation of the Kingdom of God surpasses immeasurably all this relative realization in individual activity, the same is also surpassingly great. Since the pay is of a uniform kind, the measure is not to be found in the individual service, which will always be different, according to ability and conduct of life, but only in the effort to attain the right goal as such, i. e., the fidelity in the service of God (cf. 1 Cor. iv. 2). But no more powerful impulse is to be found in striving after the ideal than the certainty that it can be realized at some time; and therefore the certain hope of this reward is the impulse for all the service rendered by the servant of God.

The promise of reward made by Jesus is appropriated throughout by the apostolic preaching. Even in 2 John viii., the readers receive the full pay of the work the apostle has done in their case. Christ comes to bring the reward to His servants (Rev. xi. 18) and His reward is with Him (xxii. 12). It is even said in Heb. x. 35-36 that the attainment of the reward of the covenant, toward which all the arrangements for salvation in both the old and the new covenant are directed, is the pay for holding fast to the joyful confidence in these promises, in order thereby to encourage this confidence. Paul makes use of the figure of the seed and the harvest in order to represent the heavenly consummation as a necessary result of efforts on earth (Gal. vi. 7-8), and calls this a reward of victory (1 Cor. ix. 24-25; Phil. iii. 14), which the athlete on reaching the goal receives from the just Judge (2 Tim. iv. 8). In this

figure it becomes perfectly clear that this relation between pay and service is determined solely by divine grace in order to encourage us to be faithful in our calling as the servants of God. Even the attainment of the possession destined for us, which in other cases is described as the consequence of our being received as children, is in Col. iii. 24 called a reward of a service devoted exclusively to the Lord. Also in James i. 72; 1 Pet. v. 4, this consummation of redemption is called the crown of honor that awaits us at the goal.

However this reward is by no means one that we receive only in the world to come. As the growth in the development of salvation in Heb. vi. 9-10 is represented from the side of God as a reward for the service of love so far rendered by the believers, and as the preservation of this reward amid temptations is depicted as a reward for the preservation of the word, which demands patience (Rev. iii. 10), thus John likes to call the being and continuance of God and of Christ in us, in a pointed manner an equivalent reward for our being and continuing in them, although it is merely the consequence of this. Then, too, the thought that blessings will be received where blessings are given (1 Pet. iii. 9) is not foreign to the New Testament. It is altogether a mistake to think that the Old Testament law of retaliation has been abrogated by the New Testament doctrine of grace. Peter appropriates the sharp expression of the former from Ps. 34, 13-17, and reproduces it in his own words (1 Pet. iii. 10-12). As reward for the way in which the Philippians have fully satisfied the needs of the apostle, God will satisfy their needs in a surpassing manner (Phil. iv. 18-19). Indeed Paul promises an abundant harvest to the rich sowing of love; and as a result the Corinthians will ever receive new impulses to works of charity (2 Cor. ix. 6, 10-11). He discusses the reward of the teacher extensively, which indeed will be different in

accordance with the difference in the service (1 Cor. iii. 8); but in doing so he has not in mind a difference in the degree of blessedness, but of praise which God bestows upon the faithful workers (iv. 5), when that which he has done to the congregation will redound to his glory on the day of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. i. 14; Phil. ii. 16; xiv. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 19-20). In order to attain this reward he indeed tries to do more than his duty requires (1 Cor. ix. 17-18), for the mere fulfilment of his duty only saves him from the punishment that would be meted out to him, if he did not do his duty (ix. 6), and which, like the reward, can be only one, namely, the denial of salvation. But what is true of his duties as an apostle applies naturally to every duty of an individual, to the fulfilment of which obligation his calling as a servant of God should urge him on. In this way the fulfilment of the divine will at all times receives the necessary impulses, through this consciousness that contains the promise of reward, just as the certainty of the inheritance at all times strengthens the religious consciousness in reference to our relation to God, which has been made normal again by our state of grace.

CHAPTER XVII.

REGENERATION AND SANCTIFICATION

1. **The Essence of Regeneration.**—The specific experience which the believers make in the state of grace is regeneration. James calls it the highest of all the good and perfect gifts that come from above, that God has begotten us from His own free will, through the word of truth, as this is given us in the proclamation that Jesus has been exalted to the Messiahship, to be a first fruit especially dedicated to Him from among all His creatures (James i. 18). The word of God's law that, according to prophetic promises, has been implanted in the heart of believers can now save souls (i. 21), because it is a word given to liberty (i. 25; cf. ii. 12); i. e., because these souls feel that they have been delivered from the bondage of sin, that so far hindered its fulfilment. We still hear the joyful echo of the experience once made in the words of Peter, who, like every Israelite, had possessed a hope of redemption, but one that was dead and impotent to produce religious life, because it pointed only to an uncertain future, but who had felt that only through the fact that Jesus had been exalted to the Messiah, he had been regenerated to a lively and potent hope (1 Pet. xiii.). The believers, however, to whom he writes, experience the power of the living and incorruptible word of God, that is declared to them in this message of redemption, in the regeneration to an unfeigned love to the brethren (i. 22-23, 25). They know that they have been saved by the blood of the Mediator of redemption from the fetters with which

they had been bound during their old life in unprofitable legalism, which did not permit a life pleasing to God (i. 18-19). The old things have passed away; all things are become new, is the exclamation of Paul in 1 Cor. v. 17. It is a new creation that we have experienced (Gal. vi. 15; cf. Eph. ii. 10), in which a new man has been created in him after God (Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24). The apostle bases this on the imparting of the Holy Spirit in baptism (Tit. iii. 5) as the new power of God that has thereby imparted to him fills his whole being. Through this spirit of Christ he has been delivered from the dominion of sin, because this spirit has transferred him into a living communion with Christ (Rom. viii. 2). In a living communion with Him who died for the sake of his sins, he finds everything that the world has and is, i. e., his whole sinful being has been crucified for him and he for the world (Gal. vi. 14). His old man, a servant of sin, has died in Christ (Rom. vi. 5-6); with the risen Lord he has been awakened to a new life (vi. 5; cf. Col. ii. 12; Eph. ii. 6). In the living communion with Him, he has died unto sin and now lives only for God (Rom. vi. 11), because in reality he no longer lives, but only Christ in him (Gal. ii. 20), whose heart beats in him (Phil. i. 8), who in this life upon earth is His one and all (Phil. i. 21).

Especially does John emphasize the fact that the dwelling of God in us necessarily brings with it that His love is transferred to us. This is what He means by saying that we are begotten of God (1 John ii. 29; iii. 9) in consequence of which we are of Him (iv. 6; v. 18-19), i. e., are in our character determined by Him. It is this result of His grace that makes us children like unto God (John i. 12-13). The fact that we are begotten of God is known in this, that we no longer sin, and indeed can no longer sin (1 John iii. 9-10). It is perfectly useless to try to weaken these expressions. This only follows that he who has not

yet entered upon this stage, has not yet been begotten of God, or has not yet experienced this fully. John knows full well that it is empty self-deception to think that we have no more sin (i. 8), and that we must constantly be admonished to sin no more (ii. 1). He accordingly understands this being begotten of God, in so far as this has actually taken place, as a potent beginning, which only through constant self-preservation over against sin can attain to a permanent condition (v. 18). But as this being begotten of God is a work of God, which is experienced by the believing in the communion with God that has been made possible only through seeing God in Christ, his purpose in this statement is to point to the fact, that only through constant uniting with God through Christ this condition can be realized gradually and in a more and more perfect form. Therefore, new admonitions are constantly added to the effect that those who do evil have never seen God (3 John xi.), that he who does not love has never seen God (1 John iv. 8); that all claims of having seen God (iii. 6), of having known God or having communion with God (i. 6; ii. 4) that is considered compatible with sinning and the non-observance of the divine law is a lie. All moral progress is only possible through a renewed and closer union with the source of religious life, which is made possible for us through seeing God in the historical Christ.

The oldest Scripture passages treating of this subject look upon regeneration in the same light. In seeming contradiction to this, according to James i. 21, the implanted word must be constantly received again, if it is to save souls. With the word, through which they have been begotten the new born babes must again be nourished, so that through this word they may grow into deliverance (1 Pet. ii. 2). Although they have put on Christ in baptism (Gal. iii. 27) the believers must nevertheless again put on Christ (Rom. xiii. 14); although the old man has

died in Christ, they must yet constantly put him off and put on the new man (Col. iii. 9-10; Eph. iv. 22 sqq.); although they have crucified their flesh and all its lusts and affections (Gal. v. 24), they must yet through the Spirit destroy the activity of the body that stands in the service of sin (Rom. viii. 13). These seemingly contradictory statements emphasize all the more strongly that in regeneration only the beginning of a new life has been established, which in accordance with the principal of human development is only gradually to grow into a life that is made perfect in Christ (Gal. iv. 19). But through God's grace a potent beginning is made in the state of grace, which carries with it the possibility of a full development. Only the certainty that this possibility is here furnishes the impulse to attempt its further development; only the constant presence of the ideal, the realization of which is made possible by this presence, can supply the motive and the joy to realize the same. A regeneration through which the ideal has already been realized is unknown to the New Testament.

2. The Essence of Sanctification.—The same is true of sanctification. In the biblical sense it is clear of itself that no one can sanctify himself; but in the state of servitude to God we are dedicated to be His property and are equipped for His service. The matter at bottom is then always this, to be preserved blameless in the state of this holiness (1 Thess. iii. 13), so that no new pollution of sin destroys this state. And yet this very preservation is described as consisting in a constant renewal in a more perfect sanctification of our whole being through God (1 Thess. v. 23). It is described as an act that takes place once in our baptism (1 Cor. vi. 11); and yet our sanctification is demanded in 1 Thess. iv. 3, enjoined upon us as the will of God. Here it appears clearly that this will demands of us only the abstaining from everything that would destroy

this sanctification. According to 2 Cor. vii. 1, also the sanctification that has been implanted into us is brought to a full realization through a constant renewal of the purification of ourselves from all pollution. It is nothing but a positive expression of this fact, when in 1 Pet. 15 the demand is made, that we shall be holy in all our conversations, to prove the sanctification that has been given us in all our deeds (2 Cor. i. 12). That same Epistle to the Hebrews, in which our being holy (in the sense of the cleansing from the pollution of guilt making possible our dedication to God) is constantly considered as the immediate effect of the death of Christ (x. 10, 29) admonishes us to seek holiness, as though it were a gift yet to be attained (xii. 14), and says, that the object of the providential education of God in our lives is the participation in His holiness (xii. 10). The seeming contradiction is found here as in the statements made concerning the ideal that *is* realized in the regeneration and yet always *is yet to be* realized, because it *can be* realized only after the grace of God has implanted in men a potent motive and a beginning. Here, too, it is very evident, that this constant growth in the realization takes place only through divine protection and co-operation. Paul is the first who teaches that the spirit that has been given in baptism is the principle of the new moral life, and thus it becomes clear, that this protection and co-operation is in the ordinary way transmitted to us only through the divine power that is bestowed upon us. Hence results, that he not infrequently speaks of a sanctification in a sense that corresponds more to the common idea of moral perfection, than this is done elsewhere (cf. Rom. vi. 19-27).

In the case of Paul accordingly we find a detailed description of the process of sanctification. This is based on the fact that in spite of regeneration, the flesh, i. e., the natural human life, which is still susceptible to sinful im-

pulses, has not been destroyed in us as long as we are upon earth. But when in regeneration a new divine power has been bestowed upon us through the Spirit, then Christianity becomes a constant struggle of the flesh against the Spirit, since the two have contrary impulses (Gal. v. 17). The point in the process of sanctification is accordingly how far the regenerated man walks according to the flesh and how far according to the Spirit (Rom. viii. 4), how far he is a spiritual man (Gal. vi. 1), i. e., a man determined by God's power through the Spirit, or how far he is a man of the flesh (1 Cor. iii. 3). But reason, too, belongs to the natural life of the flesh (Col. ii. 18), which through the sinful impulses of the flesh has lost the ability to know the will of God and accordingly must be constantly renewed for an examination of this will (Rom. xii. 2). Therefore Paul says of the Corinthians, in whose moral life the workings of the spirit was as yet very meagre, that he regards them as being yet entirely in the flesh; he is not able as yet to impart to them the deeper doctrines of truth (1 Cor. iii. 1-2), which could be understood only by the spiritual minded (ii. 15). But this struggle between the spirit and the flesh is not of a hopeless character, as that contest is, which the apostle on the basis of his experience with the law, describes in Rom. i., and in which, in opposition to the purely theoretical powers of reason, the power of sin dwelling in the flesh always comes out victorious (vii. 23-25). The new spiritual power proves itself to be divine and overwhelming as soon as man submits to its influence. In this way he can gradually attain to the development of Christian knowledge and character (chap. xiii. 4); although naturally this new spiritual life, too, must always be dedicated to God anew and be cleansed from all pollution (1 Cor. vii. 34; 2 Cor. vii. 1; cf. 1 Thess. v. 23). Gradually then the transformation into the similarity of the spiritual supremacy of Christ will result, which is

the pledge of our final complete participation in His glory (2 Cor. iii. 18).

It is a fatal misunderstanding if, as is often done, we see in this contest between the flesh and the spirit only a struggle against the lusts of the senses, although Paul counts among the works of the flesh also the sins of a lack of love and pride (Gal. v. 19-20), and declares that all kinds of sinful desires grow out of the flesh and its thoughts (Eph. ii. 3). It was natural in the surroundings of the early Christians, that their development in sanctification was at all times endangered by the pollution of particular sins that had marked their lives as heathens, the sins of lasciviousness and covetousness. But Paul does not at all think that their sanctification consists only in their gradual cleansing from such sins. And when it occasionally seems that he regards the sinful impulses that he antagonizes as proceeding solely from the body and its lusts (Rom. vi. 12; viii. 13) this is to be explained on the ground that according to the regular order the Spirit already is dwelling in the believers and has obtained the supremacy there and therefore their sinful impulses proceed only from the lower sensual nature of man. But in Rom. vi. 19 he expressly states, that sanctification is the fruit of this, that man subjects all of his members to righteousness, i. e., to the normal conduct as servants in harmony with the will of God. Sanctification is the fruit of a perfect freedom from sin and of complete service of God (vi. 22). It is of the greatest importance that sanctification does not consist in the laying aside of special, even grievous sensual sins, but in the positive subjection of the whole person to God, to whom we can render service only when all the organs of our senses become weapons of righteousness, i. e., means for the realization of righteousness in the struggle against sin (iv. 17). But this state of being pleasing in the sight of God can only be attained if we submit ourselves

entirely to His will and to obedience to Him (vi. 16). It was not Paul's fault that men have been content with the righteousness that is given us by grace. He has expressly held up over against the picture of this new righteousness (Rom. iii. 5), the fact that, on the basis of the grace that has been given us in baptism, our actual righteousness must be attained and can be attained (Rom. vi.). But this righteousness is nothing else than the fulfilment of the divine will, in which the moral ideal is realized in the same way in which the religious ideal is realized when we put our trust in Him, who out of grace pronounces the sinner just.

3. The Freedom from the Law.—For the faithful in Israel the question as to the norm according to which God's will was to be fulfilled could not possibly be raised. Jesus had Himself fully recognized the revelation of God's will in the Old Testament (chap. i. 2) and had not with a single word absolved them from the duty to fulfil the law, which had been imposed upon them in circumcision (Gal. v. 3). How this was to be fulfilled Jesus had Himself explained (chap. xi. 2); and when James speaks of the perfect law (i. 25), he evidently thinks of the law as Jesus had taught that it should be fulfilled, since he, too, appeals to the very words of the Old Testament law (ii. 8-19), just as in his mentioning the law of love as the royal law and in the command not to judge, there are distinct reminiscences of Jesus' interpretation of the law (ii. 8; iv. 11).

Our distinction between a moral and a ceremonial law is entirely unknown to the New Testament. That in cases of a conflict charity stood higher than duty to cultus Jesus has set down as self-evident by a simple appeal to the word of the prophets (Hos. vi. 6; Matt. xii. 6). The eternal thoughts of God also, which find their expression in the Old Testament cultus order, could be completely realized only in the New Testament worship of God, which

was no longer bound to a fixed place of cultus (John iv. 21). Jesus, too, who had already taught the fulfilment of the letter of the law in the sense of the divine lawgiver, has repeatedly pointed out how this takes place; and the Epistle to the Hebrews has expanded this in brilliant typology. And when the hardening of Israel and the divine judgment over the people had resulted in the overthrow of their political state and therewith also of the cultus inseparably connected with this state, then it became clear, that the exalted Christ now yet demanded only this, that the nations that had been made His disciples should be taught to keep His commandments, i. e., the commands taught by Himself (Matt. xxviii. 20). In the Revelation we find that only the words of God and of Christ are enjoined by the prophet; and the commands which his epistle says should be observed expressly include the demand of faith in the name of Jesus and of the love of the neighbor, as He had enjoined this (1 John iii. 22-23; cf. John xiii. 34). But the fact remains that all sin by its very nature is the rebellion against the divine law (1 John iii. 4) as it is constantly condemned in the case of the libertinism of the Gentile Christians (Matt. vii. 23; xiii. 41; xxiv. 12). Not only that the believer knows what he is to do, is everywhere regarded as a self-evident matter by the apostles, but also that he can do what is asked of him. According to ancient prophetic promise the word of God is written in his heart (Heb. viii. 10; x. 16; cf. James i. 21). Already in the wisdom literature of the Old Testament wisdom is described as the innerly appropriated law, that goes beyond its letter in teaching the divine will, and such wisdom can always be sought of God by prayer and is surely given in answer to the believing prayer (James i. 5-6).

The apostles did not impose the Jewish law upon the converts who were won from heathendom (Gal. ii. 3), and Peter and James have both, although in different ways,

given the reasons for this (Acts xv. 8-11; xiv. 18). Notwithstanding this there existed for a long time a tendency in the primitive Church, that regarded it as self-evident, that if the Gentiles wanted to take part in the promises of Israel, they must become members of the chosen people through submission to the rite of circumcision. It was a natural thought that if the Gentiles accepted the God of Israel and the Messiah whom He had sent, that then they must submit to His law. To this was added, that the altogether different order of life which this law imposed upon the Jewish Christians, in many cases made impossible that congregational life with the Gentile Christians, who were free of the law, which was demanded by the principle of brotherly love (e. g., in the love feasts) (Gal. ii. 12). But Paul, who had the special call to be the apostle of the Gentiles, could not possibly admit, that the Gentiles, who had been called to God through him, should first become Jews in order to participate in the full salvation that he had offered them in the name of God. The secret of redemption, which had not yet been made known to the prophets of the Old Testament as it was now revealed to the apostles, is declared by him in Eph. iii. 4 sqq., to be this very thing, that salvation was actually bestowed upon the Gentiles through the gospel and not through proselyting method (cf. also Col. i. 26-27). The law was once for all abrogated for the Christians as the order of salvation (Rom. x. 4).

This did not exclude that Paul, in accordance with the principle that every one should remain in the station in which he had been found when called to the gospel (1 Cor. vii. 17), himself as a born Jew considered it obligatory for him to observe the order of life that had been made obligatory upon him through his circumcision, in so far as the duties of his office and love did not compel him, in view of the heathen, to depart from it (ix. 21). But these things

had lost all redemptive importance in his eyes and became harmful, if in any way they interfered with the knowledge and the appropriation of the one redemption in Christ (Phil. iii. 7-8). With perfect right he could, according to 1 Cor. vii. 18, declare it a slander, when it was stated that he had enjoined upon the Jews no longer to circumcise their children (Acts xxi. 21). But he could no longer find in this order of life an obligation binding upon himself or upon the believers from among the Jews in general; for these, too, had been called to membership in the congregation, without such duties being imposed on them (Gal. v. 13). They were the children of the free woman (iv. 31) and in principle free from the law. How the apostle with his training as a student of the Scriptures explained these things from a theological point of view, whether this was done through the vicarious fulfilment of the law through Christ (iv. 4-5), or in this way, that the old man, subject to the law had died in the communion of life with Christ (Gal. ii. 19-20; Rom. vii. 4 sqq.) is naturally of no religious significance for us. The main fact remains, that in principle through the redemption achieved in the death of Jesus, together with the law as an order of redemption, also the law as an order of life had been abrogated (Col. ii. 14), and in this way for all sinners the wall of partition between Judaism and heathendom had been removed (Eph. ii. 14 sqq.). The decisive justification for this was found in the fact that the spirit had taken the place of the letter of the law (2 Cor. iii. 3, 6; Rom. vii. 6), which spirit not only instructed the believers more perfectly as to what they were to do, but also urged them on and gave them the power to do this (Rom. viii. 3-4), which the law had never been able to effect. As a matter of fact the love that the spirit awakened in them was the fulfilment of the law (Gal. v. 13-14; Rom. xiii. 10). Jesus Himself had declared that the law would not pass away in the sense that it would con-

tinue until that which it demanded had been fulfilled (Matt. v. 18). Then naturally the law would cease in its demanding function, of itself, to continue as a law that had been fulfilled, and hence no longer as law. This had actually taken place. The children of God under the impulse of the Spirit no longer stand under any law (Rom. vi. 14-15), not even under the law of Christ, which they fulfilled of themselves (Gal. vi. 1-2). Reason as renewed by regeneration taught them to examine of themselves as to what was good and pleasing in the sight of God (Rom. xii. 2; cf. Eph. v. 10; Phil. i. 10).

Naturally it was necessary to instruct them in this, since regeneration was only the beginning of a new life (chap. xvii. 1), and the spirit still had to struggle against the old natural man (chap. xvii. 2). Therefore Paul was compelled in all of his letters to admonish his congregations in reference to the proper Christian life; and in difficult individual cases, by virtue of the gift of the spirit he possessed, to give them counsel (1 Cor. vii. 25, 38), or even directly at the command of Christ, i. e., by virtue of his office (2 Thess. iii. 6). But as the law of the old covenant was for him a revelation of the divine will and continued to be such, he could also as occasion demanded, appeal to a command in the Old Testament in its literal form (Eph. vi. 2-3), or in its allegorical interpretation (1 Cor. ix. 8-9), just as the Scriptures themselves give instruction in manifold form for the development of Christian life (Rom. xv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 11). His pupil, Luke, also finds in one of the parables of the Lord the lesson that the law is to retain its permanent significance in its purpose to bring about repentance (Luke xvi. 17-18, 29 sqq.; cf. 1 Tim. i. 9-10). In the same way Paul could appeal to certain norm giving statements of Christ (1 Cor. vii. 10-11; ix. 14-15), even if he did not know how to give the reasons for the demands these made. Above all he could appeal to the example of Jesus Christ itself (Rom.

xv. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 9; Eph. v. 2; Phil. ii. 5). If this is done with less frequency than is by the original apostles (1 Pet. ii. 21-22; 1 John ii. 6; iii. 3-7; iv. 17; Rev. i. 9), the ground of this is to be sought for in the fact that Paul did not have before his eyes a vivid picture of the earthly career of Jesus, and that he trusted in the workings of the Holy Spirit, who would of Himself, in the living communion in Christ, reconstruct a picture of His life in the believers. When he so frequently appeals to his own example (1 Cor. iv. 6-7; xi. 1; Phil. iii. 17; iv. 9) it does not follow that he considered his life as a perfect model, but only this, that in him as a fully developed Christian there had become a reality of life which the Spirit wanted to work and did work. In the same sense he counts on the gradual development of Christian conduct, which he, as far as this was already fixed positively, declares to be binding on the single congregations (1 Cor. xi. 16; xiv. 33). Legal enactments were no longer needed in this direction, since, as we have seen, the believing acceptance of the redemptive acts of God and of Christ is the fundamental experience of the Christian in the call to the new state of grace; and in the regeneration that comes with it are found sufficient impulses for a God-pleasing conduct, in which accordingly everywhere God Himself, His Word and His spirit or the exalted Christ are active.

4. **The New Morality.**—At bottom the new Christian morality no longer consists in a system of actions prescribed by a law, but in a uniform fundamental state of mind that determines all actions. The statement of Christ that love is the greatest commandment, because it finds its measure and its law only in the love of the heart that lives on love (Matt. vii. 12) and upon the fulfilment of which all the other commandments depend (Matt. xxii. 39-40), cannot be grasped more deeply than this is done by Paul, who declares that love is the fulfilment of the whole law (Gal. v. 14),

and which never is completely accomplished (Rom. xiii. 8-10). For the object that Christ had in view was not to draw a new line of demarcation between great and small commandments, which formed the subject of the minute theological speculations of the day, but over against all this measuring and weighing of the commandments of God, which were in reality all of equal value (Matt. v. 18; James ii. 10) to make an end of the moral casuistry. In his glorification of love Paul declares that it excludes even the slightest injury of the neighbor (1 Cor. xiii. 4-7). According to Col. iii. 14, love is the tie that binds together the detail manifestation of Christian perfection so that none of these can be lost. But this love is awakened in the hearts of the children of God through the love of God, which they have experienced because the child must and wants to be like the father (Matt. v. 45-48; Eph. v. 1; 1 John iv. 16-9); and also through the powerful example of Christ, which exhibits this ideal in realized form (John xiii. 34; Eph. v. 2). This love is more closely defined as the love for the brethren (1 Pet. i. 22; Heb. xiii. 1; Rom. xii. 10), especially by John, who declares that its motive is found in the consciousness of the fact that we are all begotten of the God (1 John v. 1). But as this love cannot, without losing its intrinsic value, count upon a return of love (Matt. v. 46-47), whereby it be only a loan that requires no sacrifice (Luke vi. 36), although it is only the extent of the sacrifice that can measure this love, as Jesus explains in connection with the widow's mite (Mark xii. 41-44), this love shows itself in its purest and most perfect form as love for our enemies. Love for one's enemies, according to Matt. v. 44, can do everything if it can pray for them. In the faithful prayers for others, of which the New Testament furnishes such brilliant models, as also in fraternal admonitions and exhortations, which would lead the erring brother back upon the right way (James v. 19-20; Heb. x. 24-25) is

found an imitation of the seeking and saving love of God for sinners, which we have all felt (Matt. xviii. 12-16). On the other hand, every seeming exhibition of love is useless if it proceeds from any other motive than that loving state of the heart (Matt. vi. 2; 1 Cor. xiii. 3). But this is here, too, not a feeling, a sympathetic inclination, not even a powerless taking part in the troubles of the neighbor (James ii. 15-16; 1 John iii. 17-18); but is the sentiment that does not seek its own, but that which is the others (1 Cor. xiii. 5; Phil. ii. 4). Only when this is done is the fundamental sin of selfishness overcome.

But this love must prove itself in unselfish service, wherein the disciple is to show his true greatness after the example of Christ (Matt. xx. 26 sqq.; John xiii. 14-15). Such service is not possible without humility, that does not exalt itself above the other (Mark ix. 34 sqq.) nor seek rank or titles (Matt. xxiii. 7-10), does not esteem itself better than the others and therefore does not judge haughtily and want to correct others (vii. 1-5), but is willing to submit itself to others (Phil. ii. 3). For this reason love everywhere appears in the exhortatory portions of the apostolic letters as connected with humility and as the second cardinal Christian virtue (1 Pet. iii. 8; Rom. xii. 16; Col. iii. 12). By this the other fundamental sin, that of pride, is overcome. But this victory is in turn again the necessary consequence of the fundamental experience of redemption, according to which we can accomplish nothing of ourselves through our own worthiness, and self-praise is accordingly out of the question (Rom. iii. 27; 1 Cor. i. 29). It is only the reverse side of this humility when we do not estimate too highly that which we have a right to demand of others or the injury we may have received from them; for which reason gentleness and mildness is everywhere found connected with the example of Christ (2 Cor. x. 3; cf. Matt. xi. 29). Because gentleness will not suffer itself to be provoked or embittered

tered; it does not seek revenge (Matt. v. 39 sqq.; 1 Cor. vi. 7-8; 1 Pet. iii. 9; cf. Rom. xii. 19 sqq.), but bears injustice with long suffering (Eph. iv. 2; Col. iii. 12-13); is peaceable (James iii. 13; Rom. xii. 18); forgives as it would be forgiven (Eph. iv. 32; cf. Matt. xviii. 24-35). All other conduct then naturally springs from love; all lying is impossible because this undermines confidence and makes the fraternal union of Christians out of the question (Eph. iv. 25); diligence is a matter of course, so that we may have to give to the needy (iv. 28); it regulates all social intercourse, so that we can serve our neighbor with every word also (iv. 29) and will not mislead him with unchaste and frivolous words (v. 4). Later the apostle describes the new morality as all that is worthy of love and praise (Phil. iv. 8) and brings to naught also the evil slander of those who are not Christians (1 Tim. iii. 6-7; 1 Pet. ii. 12, 15).

But the Christian finds himself surrounded by a moral order which Christianity has not established. In this case the fundamental rule is to be applied that every one shall abide in the surroundings in which his call to Christianity found him (1 Cor. vii. 17; xx. 24) and see in this call the demand through a faithful performance of his duties to serve the Lord in the right way in these surroundings. Accordingly the Christian is to submit to the human order of the government for God's sake (1 Pet. ii. 13) and regard the government as appointed by God (Rom. xiii. 1 sqq.), for which reason the duty toward God does not exclude but includes the duty as a citizen (Mark xii. 17). If conflicts occur, the will of God must as a matter of course prevail (Acts iv. 19; v. 29); but as for the rest it is the Christian's duty to live a life retired from the world, not interfering by word or deed in the affairs of the world, of which, however, prayer for the government is a part (1 Tim. ii. 2). The permanence of the marriage tie demanded by Jesus (Mark

x. 8, 9), Paul insists upon even in the case of mixed marriage and adds the prohibition of contracting a further marriage for the guilty half (1 Cor. vii. 10-16). Notwithstanding the self-evident religious equality of the sexes (Gal. iii. 28, cf. 1 Pet. iii. 7) the social status of the woman remains unchanged in marriage; the husband is the head of the woman, only that his own subordination to God through Christ does not permit him to exercise any tyranny (1 Cor. xi. 3). Rather the love of Christ for his congregation is made a model of the love for the wife, just as the willing subjection of the congregation to Christ is a model for the wife (Eph. v. 24, 25). Thereby slandering the message of redemption, as if it absolved from the fulfilment of natural duties is made improbable (Tit. xxv.) and even the unbelieving man can be won (1 Pet. iii. 1). The command that women shall not preach, expressly repeated in 1 Tim. ii. 12; from 1 Cor. xiv. 34, is based on the fact that he who prays publicly or delivers an address of devotion or exhortation rules the congregation, which is contrary to the natural subordination of woman. Then too the duty of children to parents, as this is laid down in the Old Testament, is not changed (Eph. vi. 1 sqq.), but the fact is rather emphasized that the compliance with this duty, especially when the child has entered into the living communion with Christ, is alone pleasing to Him (Col. iii. 20). Parental training is regulated by the fact that this really proceeds from the Lord, whose instrument the father is (Eph. vi. 4).

In the strongest way the Apostle Paul has emphasized his position of maintaining the natural order of things by his advice given to Christian slaves not to free themselves, even if they have the chance, but to remain slaves, in order to fulfil their Christian duties in the state in which God has placed them (1 Cor. vii. 21). He bases this on the fact, that even as a slave he had by Christ been led to true freedom, and that even if he became free he would continue to be a

servant of Christ (vii. 22). If in the new relationship with Christ, brought about by the Spirit, the difference between slaves and freemen has ceased to exist (1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 28), thereby slavery in the sense of the ancient world had also ceased to exist. The slave now did not serve because he was compelled to, but saw in his earthly master his heavenly Master, who called him to account for the way in which he had fulfilled his duty (Col. iii. 23 sqq.; Eph. vi. 6 sqq.). Through renewed zeal in the service of his Christian master he would only add credit to his calling as a Christian (1 Tim. vi. 2; Tit. ii. 10). Also over against the unbelieving master he was to see to it, that Christian doctrine was not blasphemed (1 Tim. vi. 1), and could be certain, that, if notwithstanding his fulfilment of duty he patiently suffered evil from his master, he would thereby win favor with God (1 Pet. ii. 20). On the other hand, all tyranny of the master had been put away, when he could say or command the slave to do for him only what he could answer for to his Lord in heaven (Col. iv. 1; Eph. vi. 9). Paul sends the runaway slave back to his master; but he reminds Philemon of the fact that the latter was no longer his slave but a beloved brother (Phil. v. 16). From this standpoint there was no need of specific directions for the fulfilling of well-known duties of a certain station. The idea of a reformation of the natural arrangement of things in the spirit of Christ, is not found in the apostolic letters even when they speak in words of exhortation of the relation of Christians to each other. The reason for this is found in the simple fact, that their leading interest was to be found in the cultivation of religious life, out of which came as a natural thing the regulation of morals; and that the expectations of the speedy coming of Christ and of the end of the world excluded all needs of such special regulations. Here it becomes perfectly clear how it came to be reserved as the duty of the Christian congregation of later times through

their spirit to transfuse the completely changed political and social conditions of things. The injunctions of the apostles cannot be directly applied to them; but just as little can these injunctions be ignored, as far as religious principles are concerned, on account of these changes.

5. **Ascetics and Adiaphora.**—For the personal life of the Christian there is but one norm, namely, to walk worthy of our calling, or of Christ, or of the gospel (Eph. iv. 1; Col. i. 10; Phil. i. 27), i. e., to avoid everything that is contrary to our new religious relation to God and our state of grace. Here the Apostle Paul had to carry on a severe struggle against the traditional views of his Gentile Christian congregations, who considered the extra marital sexual relations, in so far as the rights of the husband were not touched, as something from a moral point of view perfectly indifferent, as merely the satisfaction of a natural desire (cf. 1 Cor. vi. 13). To this is added that the worst sins of heathendom sprang from this inclination to gratify the lusts, which naturally always needed new means for their gratification (Rom. i. 26-27). Although Judaism was as a rule free from this licentiousness, which Paul regards as the specific characteristic of heathenism (Rom. i. 24), yet even in the case of the Jewish Christians it was always necessary too, to admonish to keep the marital relation sacred (Heb. xiii. 4). But if in this case the emphatic remembrance of the command not to commit adultery was sufficient, yet Paul could not from his standpoint concerning Christian freedom hope to root out this evil by a mere appeal to a command of God or of Christ, but he had to draw attention to the fact that such action was contrary to the mission of the body to be an organ in the service of Christ (1 Cor. vi. 13-14), that fornication was injurious to the living union with Christ (vi. 16) and was a sin against one's own body, which, being dedicated by the Spirit to be a temple of God, belongs to God and is to serve His glory

(vi. 18 sqq.). In this he has once for all set up the principle that the power of sexual lust can be overcome only through religious motives.

Those times were much inclined to seek deliverance from this sin by ascetical exercises and overlooked the fact that the compulsory suppression of natural desires in the place of satisfying them in a manner pleasing to God, will avenge itself by leading to worse sins (1 Cor. vii. 2-5). Paul, too, regarded such exercises as something in themselves useful, in so far as their purpose was only, through practice in self-denial to secure supremacy over the natural desires (ix. 24-27). In this sense he could say that the entire abstinence from sexual relations is for everybody something praiseworthy and desirable (vii. 1, 7-8); but had to warn strongly against the attempt to force it contrary to natural inclinations. In this sense he declares the question of marriage to be an *adiaphoron* (vii. 8, 36 sqq.); forbidding marriage on dualistic grounds he considers a devilish false doctrine (1 Tim. iv. 1 sqq.). To the current view, according to which at least the second marriage was regarded as a sign of inability to abstain (cf. Luke ii. 36-37), he has, in so far yielded, that he wanted to secure the church officials at any rate against this accusation by giving the direction that only those are to be chosen who had been married but once (1 Tim. iii. 2, 12; v. 9). Jesus already had mentioned as the only justifiable motive for the failure to marry, not the fear of the earnest and heavy responsibilities, but the exclusive devotion to the service of the Kingdom of God (Matt. xix. 10 sqq.). Paul also found a leading motive for his preference (1 Cor. vii. 32 sqq.) in his own experience that the fact that he was not married facilitated this devotion. But to the other messengers of the gospel, who were married, he acceded the full right thereto, together with all of the consequences thereof (ix. 4-5). He points out he had had sad experiences in the case of young widows who had

undertaken to devote themselves entirely to the service of Christ, and later demanded of them that they marry (1 Tim. v. 11-15).

It is a self-evident rule with reference to all other cares of the body that the natural tendencies are to be prevented by stringent self-control from degenerating into sinful desires (Rom. xiii. 13-14). Participation in the sacrificial meals of the Gentiles, with the temptations for gluttony and lust that naturally accompanied them, was absolutely forbidden by Paul from religious principles (1 Cor. x. 20 sqq.). To the desire for sensuous exhilaration through excessive use of wine he puts in contrast the higher spiritual enthusiasm, which finds its expression, not in drinking songs, but in hymns of praise (Eph. v. 18-19). But when the false teachers at Colossæ try by abstaining from the gratification of their pleasures to attain a higher state of spirituality, which alone would make them worthy of association with the heavenly world, this he rejects as a new servitude under human ordinances, which in the end would produce fleshly pride (Col. ii. 16 sqq.; xx. 24). When on the other hand men from ascetic motives deny themselves the use of meat and wine and strictly observe fast days, he only demanded in this case, that the strong should not despise the weak and that the weak should not condemn the strong. For him this only was at stake, that in all things that have no connection with Christian morals, but fall under the judgment of natural reason, everyone should be sure of his own conviction in order to act conscientiously (Rom. xiv. 3, 5). Just the strong, to whom this use was an *adiaphoron*, should rather abstain than by the reckless insisting upon his freedom to lead the weak to action contrary to his conscience, which was against the love for the brother, whom eternal salvation carried for him through the death of Christ was thereby endangered (Rom. xiv. 13 sqq.).

But there are certain kinds of abstaining that depend on

religious motives. The so-called Apostolic Council had already demanded that the believers who had been Gentiles, in addition to abstaining from fornication should refrain from all participation in the idolatrous service by partaking of the meat or the blood of sacrifices, which was a blasphemy in the eyes of the Jews from religious grounds (Lev. xvii. 11), in order not to prevent the entrance into the congregation of the Jews living abroad, whose abhorrence of these things was constantly kept alive by the reading of the law in the synogogue (Acts xv. 20-21, 29). This demand was complied with at least to this extent, that in the Gentile congregations throughout Asia Minor Christians abstained from partaking of the meat of animals that had been sacrificed to idols, which could be equally offensive also in the eyes of Gentile Christians as was fornication (Rev. ii. 14, 20). In the Corinthian congregation, too, were found those who, bound by their idea that the idols were equal to God, considered themselves polluted in their conscience by partaking of such meat (1 Cor. viii. 4-7). Paul could on principle not admit this. He considered this as an *adiaphoron*; but for this very reason lays down the same principles that he had enjoined on the Roman congregations (viii. 8-13; x. 23-28). He sought only that every pleasure allowable to the free conscience should be sanctified by prayer (x. 3; v. 20; 1 Tim. iv. 4-5; cf. Rom. xiv. 6). He has thereby for all times established the principle that no pleasure of which the Christian partakes with thanksgiving to God can be contrary to conscience, but that only such is allowed.

As a second cardinal sin of heathendom Paul everywhere regards covetousness (1 Thess. iv. 4 sqq.). Entirely in the sense of Matt. vi. he sees in it a form of idolatry (Col. iii. 5; Eph. v. 5). How easily wealth is a snare to worship earthly goods, that monopolize all of man's powers, was recognized by Jesus, when He said, that it was hard and humanly speaking impossible for a rich man to attain to salvation

(Mark x. 23 sqq.). When Jesus taught that we must sacrifice every possession, even the most valuable and indispensable, in case this leads us into temptation, and applies this even to the closest of family ties (Matt. x. 37; Luke xiv. 26) He naturally applies this first of all to riches, since the love of these is in His eyes the root of many sins (1 Tim. vi. 9-10). Jesus had demanded of the rich man, who thought that he had been willing to comply with every duty in order to attain salvation, as a proof of this willingness, that he should give all his possessions to the poor (Mark x. 21), in order thereby to lead him to a knowledge of himself. Now the idea, that getting rid of earthly possessions was a general command of Christ (Luke xi. 41; xii. 33), soon became a general idea in the church. The ascetic interests were at the bottom of this idea, that getting rid of earthly possessions was the best means of avoiding all the temptations of riches. To this is added that communism was regarded as the highest ideal of congregational life (Acts ii. 44-45; iv. 32), although it is shown beyond a doubt in Acts iv. 36-37; v. 4, that this principle was by no means a prevailing law in primitive Christianity. But this generalization was not in harmony with the mind of Jesus. The parable of the Unjust Steward teaches, according to Luke xvi. 8, without a doubt, that true wisdom does not consist in using earthly possessions for momentary purposes, but in this, that we make our future sure thereby, which depends entirely upon attaining the good pleasure of God. Certain it is, that the exclusive application of His word to the use of riches for charitable purposes (xvi. 9), which application is not of unquestionable correctness, did not belong originally to the parable. Jesus has only said, that the bitter disappointment of the foolish rich man, who wanted to gather together all his possessions for his own enjoyment, experienced in the hour of death, would be repeated in the case of everybody who is not rich in God, i. e., does not use his earthly possessions for God's purposes

(xiii. 21), because we can never be certain of attaining a real and permanent happiness through the enjoyment of earthly goods. But what is meant by this being rich in God is explained in the parable of the entrusted pounds. If all earthly goods and possessions are only entrusted to us by God, to use them according to His will, then they can be increased only by using them faithfully according to His will (xix. 26) and thereby we can expect the right to greater possessions (xvi. 11-12). But that this will of God consists only in the use of wealth for charity is nowhere indicated. Paul has evidently not understood the command not to gather earthly possessions (Matt. vi. 19) in the false literal sense, in which it is so often cited now as an argument for the ascetic tendency of Jesus' teachings (cf. 2 Cor. xii. 14). Although he strongly urges contributions to the collection for Jerusalem, he nevertheless emphasizes only this that the Corinthians through their surplus should relieve the needy in Jerusalem (viii. 12-14) and has promised them a rich return from God (ix. 8-9). Under the circumstances that prevailed in the poor congregations of early Christians there were few opportunities to warn against the dangers of riches. Here too the heathen sin of greed appeared in the Jewish Christian congregations at most in the form of a lack of confidence in God, when He did not give what they thought they needed (Heb. xiii. 5). But the Epistle of James shows, that under the pressure of poverty the secret lust for earthly possessions and all of its dire consequences could arise, which in this letter, in exact agreement with Matt. vi. 24, is regarded as enmity to God (James iv. 1-4), because it will not humbly subject itself to God's providence (iv. 5 sq.). Only in this sense did James regard the world, i. e., the totality of all earthly possessions as corrupting, because it arouses sinful desires (i. 27; cf. v. 14), and thus has in a certain way prepared the current ascetic use of this term, that condemns as worldly all possessions and endeavors that

are not directly connected with religious interests. The New Testament knows nothing of this usage of the term. Paul has only commanded that the rich man shall not be proud of his uncertain wealth, but expressly states that this wealth was given to him for enjoyment. He knows full well that this wealth can be used for many other good and noble purposes besides charity, and that in this way the fulfilment of Christian duty is advanced in a most comprehensive sense, without which it is impossible to attain eternal life (1 Tim. vi. 17 sqq.). But on this matter it is absolutely impossible to extract from the New Testament solutions of our social problems. What the New Testament says of earthly goods is altogether for the purposes of the highest religious interests.

CHAPTER XVIII

PRESERVATION AND CONSUMMATION

1. **The Dangers of Christian Life.**—As little as the first man could attain to complete God-pleasing state without a trial, so little can a believer secure his preservation as such (Rom. v. 4; cf. James i. 12) if he is not tempted. Against these temptations the Christian must always be on his guard. As surely as Christian love reaches out beyond the circle of the co-religionists and is to include all mankind (2 Pet. i. 7) so surely, too, does it find its limitations in the duty of self-preservation. The unchristian men of the world, in so far as they are and remain the world, cannot be the object of the love of the child of God, because the anti-divine element in the world does not come from God and therefore the love of the world is not in harmony with the love to the Father (1 John ii. 15-16). Naturally this does not in any way cancel the duty to seek to win the world for God and to save it (1 Cor. ix. 19, 22). The object is to prevent the love of persons from weakening the necessary antithesis against the anti-divine character of the world, that may form a temptation to us. That member of the church, too, who has become uncertain in his faith threatens the others with a pollution of their consecrated state (Heb. xii. 14-15). However much it is the duty of the Christian to seek to save his sinning brother, so much the duty of self-preservation may demand that he separate himself (Matt. xviii. 17; cf. 1 Cor. v. 11), without thereby excluding further efforts for his reformation (2 Thess. iii. 14-15).

But according to New Testament views the unbelieving world is under the dominion of Satan. For this reason all temptation to sin really emanates from him (1 Cor. vii. 5; 1 Thess. iii. 5), who thereby would overthrow the work of redemption. From this point of view the entire Christian life is a contest against satanic power (Eph. vi. 11-16). Although Satan has been in principle conquered by the death of Christ (chap. xii. 3), he yet constantly seeks to gain anew his supremacy over mankind. Here, too, what has been said of regeneration is true. As the latter is realized only in a gradual process, thus too the Christian in constant struggle against the devil must push the victory that Christ has gained over him, until he is altogether undone. As, however, only the divinely appointed beginning of the new life furnishes the power and courage to continue this contest, no Christian can offer as an excuse the power and trickery of the devil, since he has in Christ secured the ability to overcome his adversary. Satan does not touch those who are begotten of God (1 John v. 18); these gain the victory over him, because He who is greater than he of the world (iv. 4) is and works in them.

But there is no other protection against the temptations threatened by the devil than faith, which is declared by Eph. v. 16 to be the shield with which we must protect ourselves against his fiery darts. Only by standing firm in the faith can we withstand him (1 Pet. v. 9). If new life has been produced through the state of grace secured by faith (chap. xvi.), then it can be protected against all danger only by clinging to faith (1 Cor. xvi. 13; Col. i. 23), by contending for the faith (Phil. i. 27; Jude v. 3), by remaining in the state of grace established by faith (1 John ii. 28; cf. Col. ii. 7). This would, however, not be impossible if this meant the holding fast to a certain doctrine in the knowledge of the truth, since no knowledge as such can move the will. This too the apostle, on the basis of his experience with the law,

has so drastically demonstrated in Rom. vii. Nothing but this trust in the salvation achieved by Christ offers a firm support and protection for the life of the Christian, because therein are found all the motives for the proper development of this life. For that reason the greatest danger that threatens the Christian is the false doctrine that undermines this confidence and seeks to establish it on any other foundation than Christ. The servants of Satan who are clothed in the garb of the servants of righteousness, are those false apostles who maintain anew that the salvation that has been given is to be founded on the basis of an observance of the law (2 Cor. x. 13 sqq.). For as soon as we seek again to gain righteousness through the law we fall from the state of grace and sever our connection with Christ as the only Mediator of salvation (Gal. v. 4).

Even the Colossian theosophists, who did not antagonize the doctrine of salvation as such, through their speculation led away from Christ more and more (Col. ii. 8), because through their injection of new mediators of redemption in the shape of the angels whom they adored, they no longer clung to Christ as the only Mediator and head of salvation (ii. 19). Most of all the erroneous teachings mentioned in the Pastoral Epistles are throughout described as those that seek to turn the interest that should be devoted to the advance of religious life into speculations, which were without all religious value and thereby bring about the shipwreck of faith. Especially do the pseudo-prophets as described in the Epistles of John appear as inspired by the spirit of the anti-Christ, because they did not accept the historical fact of the complete revelation of God in the man Jesus (1 John iv. 3; v. 6), and thereby undermine the foundation of the state of grace, the seeing of God in faith. Here again it appears that the duty of self-protection constitutes a limitation even for the exercise of love. John demands that Christians should even refuse hospitality and greetings to

such heretics, not only on account of the danger involved to one's own faith, but also by the recognition of these men as Christian brethren not to encourage their deception of others (2 John x. 11). Other dangers, too, surround faith for the future, when the false teachers of dualistic ascetics (1 Tim. iv. 1 sqq.) would influence the congregation, because this false doctrine is based on a denial of the unity of the creation of the world and thus undermines the very first presupposition of religion. On the other hand, it is stated that the pseudo-prophets of libertinism have crept into the congregation (2 Pet. ii. 1 sqq.), who convert grace into lasciviousness and actually deny the faith in the supremacy of Christ (Jude iii. 4).

But the new dangers for the state of grace arose also from the fact that the believers lived in a world that is hostile to Christ. The believers out of Israel, if they had come to faith in the Messiah, constantly hoped that in the near future the time of bliss would be inaugurated. It was accordingly a great trial for them in that they continued in their depressed condition (James i. 9-12). which became all the more dangerous by the fact that that portion of their people who had remained in unbelief now thought they could abuse the converts as heretics. And yet they were taught to consider these trials as pure joy in the consciousness that these were a means to test them and should in the faith work patience (i. 2-3). The situation is made more acute when, as in the case of the Christians to whom the Epistle to the Hebrews is addressed, the return of Christ, which is to inaugurate this golden age, seems to be becoming more and more remote, and the hostilities of their fellow Jews in their unbelief have only increased. In this case, where a dangerous inclination to discard the belief in the Messianic mission of Jesus had already put in its appearance, there was special need of admonition to patience (Heb. x. 36; xii. 1). In the Gentile Christian congregations

in Thessalonica and in Philippi the Jewish converts had from the outset to suffer much from the portion of their people who had remained in unbelief and were accordingly tempted to become reconciled to these by discarding their faith. And when the trials which Paul considered as necessarily connected with Christianity (Acts xiv. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 4) were of any other kind, they all cause distrust of the love of God that had been gained through Christ. This danger could be overcome only in the consciousness, that these trials were sent to test the Christian in his patience and thereby help him by strengthening his hope in the future glory (Rom. v. 3-4). To what heroism of faith, the consciousness that God seeks only the good of those that are called in all that He does for them (viii. 28), and that too in the very crises of faith, leads, is seen in the triumphal hymn of Rom. viii. 32-39.

It is true that the trials that threatened the Christianity of those times was to a large extent persecution pure and simple on account of their faith, as Jesus had predicted that these would certainly come (Matt. x. 24-25; John xv. 20). In these Peter sees the devil going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, i. e., bring to a denial of the faith (1 Pet. v. 8), as Jesus had predicted this in another picture (Luke xxii. 31 sqq.). But this very patient endurance of suffering Jesus has promised to reward by testifying that the Father would bring deliverance (Matt. x. 21-22; 32-33). Therefore, Peter was able to see in his sufferings a joyful participation in the sufferings of Jesus, who also suffered at the hands of a world hostile to God, because this as a proof of discipleship made him sure of participation in the coming glory (1 Pet. iv. 13). Paul has even described this participation in the sufferings of Christ (2 Cor. i. 5-7) as only a continuation of the living communion into which Christians enter in their baptism (Rom. viii. 17). He has, by employing another description

of this idea, experienced in this a constant renewal of his fellowship in the subjection of Jesus into death and in His resurrection (2 Cor. iv. 10-11). Therefore he rejoices to make full the measure of this suffering, in order to recompense to Christ in his congregation for what He has done for him (Col. i. 24), when he is put on the same level with Him in the death of martyrdom that he expects to suffer for his calling (Phil. iii. 10). He considers this death as a drink offering, by which He is to complete the sacrifice of His life's work (Phil. ii. 17; cf. 2 Tim. iv. 6). With such deep religious motives for patient endurance (Rev. xiii. 10; xiv. 17) primitive Christianity entered into the last terrible times of persecutions, which the seer of Patmos saw in his visions.

2. **Praying and Watching.**—Over against the dangers that threaten the development of Christian life the exhortation of the apostle demands that they be watchful (1 Cor. xvi. 13; Rev. xvi. 15), i. e., the alertness of the spirit that is at all times ready for the efforts that are necessary to overcome these dangers as also for the sacrifices required for this. All lethargy of carelessness or self-certainty is thereby excluded. He calls the preparation for this sobriety (1 Thess. v. 6; 1 Pet. v. 8), i. e., the clearness of mind that is always open to the presence of dangers surrounding us and to the requirements to meet these. Thereby all weakening of this sobriety through the joys and cares of the world, as also indefinite exaltation, all empty enthusiasm, which is often suspected in primitive Christianity, is excluded. The apostolic admonitions presuppose that the believer is able and ready for every sacrifice and effort that are necessary for preservation in Christian life. This can be done, however, because in the state of grace the sufficient motives was given for this; and for this reason nothing is required except to abide in the faith, which has brought us into the state of redemption, and guarantees this state. For this

very reason the Christian can never feel that his progressive preservation is his own work, but is the outcome of the grace that is operative in this state. It is God who has begun, continues and finishes the good work; He works both to will and to do (Phil. i. 6; ii. 13).

Therefore prayer must at all times be joined with watchfulness (Mark xiv. 38; Col. iv. 2; Eph. vi. 18), of the hearing of which the believer is from the outset certain, for the very reason that he is in the state of grace. Prayer for that which is necessary for our preservation in the faith is primarily thought of. But this does not at all exclude prayer for our earthly life, as Jesus Himself has taught us to pray for our daily bread (Matt. vi. 11). To this is added that the sufferings and burdens of care often belong to the temptations that endanger the Christian, and the removal of these can be asked for on the ground that this tends to our preservation in the faith. In 1 Cor. x. 13, too, it is presupposed, that God must put an end at the proper time to temptations, so that we can bear them, i. e., that we will be strengthened by them. Peter demands on the basis of a citation from the Psalms that we should cast all our cares on the Lord (1 Pet. v. 7); and Paul teaches, that we should make known our requests and supplications in prayer to God in all simplicity (Phil. iv. 6). James directs all sufferers, whatever may be the character of their sufferings, to pray (v. 13). When Paul continued to ask of the Lord to relieve him of a troublesome bodily ailment, the Lord told him to be satisfied with his grace; but He also permitted him to experience that the power of this grace is felt all the more richly, the more the lack of one's own strength is felt (2 Cor. xii. 8 sqq.). This case is typical in this, that even if what we pray for is not given, that nevertheless the prayer is heard in a manner beneficial for our inner and higher life. But whenever the prayer is directed to the advancement of this life, it is a self-evident matter for the

believer that the prayer will be heard, because he is only asking for that which he wants to realize in us and to receive which the believing prayer makes him capable. His petitions for the congregations as for the single members, whose good was the wish of his heart (2 Cor. xi. 28-29), in so far as these appear in his letters, always pertain primarily to their spiritual welfare. Yet John prays for the good health of his beloved Gaius (3 John ii.), and James does not doubt that God will hear the prayer of faith when spoken over the sick (James i. 14-15).

One thing, however, is peculiar to the prayer of the believer, namely, its connection with thanksgiving (Phil. iv. 6). Paul prefaces all of his prayers for the congregations by thanksgiving for what God has already done for them. Just as all confirmation and strengthening in Christian life can take place only in that degree in which we learn to thank God for the salvation given us in Christ (Col. ii. 7), thus, too, all spiritual preparation for prayer is founded on thankfulness (iv. 2); for thankfulness for the good that has already been received always produces new joy and confidence in prayer, through which alone we can always receive more. In need and trouble man, as he is, can easily forget all the good things that he has received and for which he should be thankful, but the remembrance of the good things for which the believer has been the recipient, must always be present to him (i. 12 sqq.). Just as apostasy from God begins with this that we are no longer thankful to God for what He has done for us (Rom. i. 21), thus the revelation of redemption completes its work of the restoration of religion with this, that in the experience of its blessings it impels us to constant thanksgiving to God (1 Thess. v. 18). This is completed not in prayer, which is only the first sign of religious life, but in thanksgiving. In this thanksgiving we are constantly being reminded of the highest possession of re-

demption, namely, the peace of soul secured through Christ (Col. iii. 15). But this peace of God, which by its very nature is incomprehensible to human reason, is the experience of which in turn preserves us also in the communion with Christ, i. e., in the state of grace, in so far as we then do everything of ourselves that we may abide in Him who has secured this gift for us and who alone can make it our certain possession (Phil. iv. 7).

As the first congregation remained steadfast in the teachings of the Apostles, in the fellowship and the breaking of bread and in prayer (Acts ii. 42), thus too the congregation of the believers will at all times remain steadfast in the use of the means of grace that have been given to them for the preservation and cultivation of religious life (chap. xiv.), because they know that all progress in religious life always depends on the renewed and closer union with the source of religious life. They will permit the word of Christ, which constantly proclaims to them anew the salvation given us in Christ, to dwell richly among them (Col. iii. 16); and this preaching will always fill the Christian with hymns of thanksgiving for such gifts of grace (iii. 16-17; cf. Eph. v. 19-20). In this circle of new impulses and thanksgiving, which always produces a new longing for the fountain of all grace opened to us in Christ, will always lead us to a more faithful application of the means of grace together with the confident prayer for their effective use, the preservation and development of Christian life is made certain. The certainty of salvation found in the call can never be unsettled by this that there is yet need of development and proof of Christian life before the goal is finally attained; for as this call is not at all based on any human work in the past, thus, too, this final proof is not dependent on any works of the future, through the imperfections of which it might be unsettled. The believer is certain of this, that God has given him the means through which to

effect this preservation and proof, because God Himself co-operates in the use of these means. He knows that as long as he seeks this preservation and tries to attain it in the manner prescribed by God he cannot fail to secure the goal he has in view.

3. **The Judgment According to Works.**—It depends on the preservation if the individual attains the completion of redemption or not. Just as there is but one reward for faithfulness in the service of God (chap. xvi. 5) thus there is but one punishment for the unfaithfulness, namely, exclusion from redemption. All separate judgments for instances of unfaithfulness on the part of the believer can only be regarded as divine means of education, the purpose of which is to preserve him from this deplorable outcome (1 Cor. xi. 32). But as the preservation itself is only a work of the Holy Ghost, the final completion of redemption of those that are preserved is a pure gift of grace (Rom. vi. 23; 1 Pet. iii. 7). According to this, the final decision if the individual is to attain this object, does not indeed seem to depend on faith, which is itself a gift of divine grace, but upon remaining in the state of grace that has been established through faith, which is possible only when the believer permits the Spirit to continue the work of grace in him. Paul calls this abiding in the goodness of God in contrast to self-righteous pride, which necessarily leads to exclusion from the communion of those that are redeemed (Rom. xi. 20 sqq.). Christians are to test themselves to see if they stand in the faith as in the living communion with Christ, because upon this their preservation depends (2 Cor. xiii. 5). John says expressly that our joy in the judgment depends on our standing in the state of grace, in which we stand in the same relation to God in which Christ who has already entered into His glory stands, although we are yet in the world, which through its unbelief is excluded from this (1 John iv. 17). All the warn-

ings of the Epistle to the Hebrews against apostasy presuppose this, that the one thing needful is to abide in Him who has established our redemption.

In direct contradiction to this the Scriptures seemingly everywhere state that the judgment in which our final fate will be decided is a judgment according to works. This is already the case in Matt. xvi. 27 as in all the statements of Jesus, in which the completion of salvation is made dependent on fidelity in the service of God, in the works of love; and even in our words (Matt. xii. 36-37; cf. also John v. 29). In the same way it is stated in 1 Pet. i. 17 that He who is called Father by his children impartially judges according to each work; in 1 John ii. 17, that only he who does the will of God remains, when the godless world is destroyed; in Rev. xx. 12-13-14, that the dead will be judged according to their works. But Paul also maintains this original norm of divine righteousness (Rom. ii. 6) not only in a hypothetical manner for the times when there yet was no salvation in Christ, but also for the judgment in which Christ will decide the final fate of the believers (2 Cor. v. 10). He says that it would be mocking God to believe that He would not have each one reap what he has sown (Gal. vi. 7 sqq.). Nor does the easy excuse, that the "works" here meant are only the fruits and proof of faith, come into consideration. Apart from the fact that in the fully developed exposition of the doctrine of redemption by Paul good works are not looked upon as the fruits of faith (chap. xvi. 2), but of the spirit of God that is active in the state of grace, they always are here described in so many words as the doings of men, upon which in the end salvation depends, although at almost every other place in the New Testament this salvation is from the beginning to the end considered as the effect of the divine grace. Good works do not indeed in any way constitute the foundation of our redemption but they have been ordained by God for the

very purpose that we should walk in them (Eph. ii. 9-10). The fate of a man can accordingly be in the end only decided by this, if he has attained this object, or not. Therefore it is necessary that he at all times be reminded of the terrors of the divine judgment, in which the entire fulfilment of the divine will be demanded, so that he may never cease in his efforts at the preservation of his faith, i. e., in the use of the means through which this is worked in us by divine grace.

But experience shows that the evidence of faith as furnished by good works will always be more or less imperfect. Seemingly all certainty of redemption is thereby made impossible, because man can never submit to judgment after the norm of his works. But this difficulty only arises when the statements of the Scriptures are taken as dogmatical propositions, because this view grows out of the traditional idea of revelation. The fact is that the witnesses of the revelation in Christ have never felt these. They have not been the authors of the notion, that the proof of Christian faith in this life is an absolutely normal one, or that our works would be perfect and that nevertheless a judgment of works is to be expected. But they knew already from the Old Testament that the people of the covenant also were compelled again and again to seek the grace of God when they had fallen into sin of weakness or error, and that they were sure of finding this grace. Infinitely more sure they were that the grace which from the outset was offered to the believer as a pardoning and a giving grace, would also in the final judgment cover for the faithful servant of God what he had failed to do in the fulfilment of his duty. Whether he was in reality a faithful servant had to be decided by his conduct, even if he was not altogether free of faults.

With this sufficient occasion has been given for a judgment according to works. Entirely in harmony with such

a judgment Jesus said, that the merciful are blessed for they are to obtain mercy (Matt. v. 7), and that, as it appears from the connection with the Beatitudes, in the final judgment. Evidently with reference to this James says, that the judgment without mercy is passed upon him who has exercised no mercy. Mercy rejoices against justice (ii. 13), i. e., mercy appears with the triumphant certainty of finding mercy as it has exercised such (cf. Jude xxi.). In exactly the same sense it is said (1 John iii. 19 sqq.) that we can know by the fact that we love (if it is love in reality and truth, cf. iii. 18), that we are of the truth, i. e., are in the state of grace. And even if our heart notwithstanding this constantly does accuse us of weaknesses and failings and thus would make our certainty of redemption unsettled, we will convince our heart by the fact that God is greater than it is, because He knows all things, even our innermost being, however much the appearance of things may not seem to agree with this. But as our abiding in love proves our abiding in God and thereby also our abiding in the state of grace, therefore we have joy for the day of judgment (iv. 17). Both passages are based on the supposition that God looks upon the heart first in judgment, and is not satisfied with weak sentiments, that do not prove themselves in life; but in this testing He does not regard the individual works, which always may be imperfect, but the roots out of which they spring.

Even the great preacher of grace has said of himself that all of his unselfish life's work for the salvation of man had only the one purpose to receive for his own person a share in the gospel and in all the blessings that it promises (1 Cor. ix. 23). This includes the fact that this can only be done if he is faithful in fulfilling the duties of his calling. And yet he has also said, that nothing is asked of the steward except that he be faithful (iv. 2), and that he can feel that he has been faithful, even if God does not find

that everything he does is in accordance with the norm (iv. 4). He did not even claim that he had grasped the religious foundation of all new life, namely, the perfect appropriation of Christ, but that he was only engaged in this striving (Phil. iii. 12 sqq.). He saw Christian perfection only in the constant striving for this perfection (iii. 15-16). When he makes it conditional on his experience of suffering with Christ by his own death as a martyr, if he is also to experience the resurrection from the dead (iii. 10-11), he naturally presupposes that only the fullest proof of faith possible can secure for him a certainty of redemption; but of this proof as such he is certain because he knows the divine assistance for which his congregations have been praying will help him in this (i. 19). He, too, prays for the mercy of God in the final judgment, for the Onesiphorus, who has already proved himself faithful (2 Tim. i. 18). However certain he is if at the end of his career in which he has proved his faith at the hands of the just Judge of the crown of victory in store for those who demonstrate their righteousness (iv. 7-8), so little does he thereby want to deny, that he too stands in the judgment, in the need of the mercy of God, which will cover all sins.

In this connection of course it must not be forgotten that the sins such as the heathen commit exclude from the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. vi. 9-10), not because these are graver sins than others, but because they show that a man has not honestly sought that grace that forgives sins and gives new life and has not in truth yet found it; for in this case he would lay aside these sins. But otherwise too our state of grace can prove itself only if we are at all times ready for the greatest endeavors and the heaviest sacrifices that it demands; and for this the constant admonition of a judgment according to works must be a steady impulse. Certain it is that this preservation in the faith is not the work of man but is effected only by that grace of God which does its

work through the application of the means of grace and of prayer. But just so surely can the believer trust the divine grace, which even in the final judgment will cover all our transgressions if the Searcher of hearts finds that he has been faithful in his endeavors to approve himself as a believer. All relaxing in this effort in the false confidence in this grace would by this very fact destroy its foundation; and in order to prevent this, the judgment according to works must ever be held up before the eyes of the believer.

4. The Intermediate State.—The goal of the development of the preservation and growth in grace that is appointed for the believer ends at his bodily death, with which accordingly the decision of the question, whether he is to attain final salvation, is already given (Heb. ix. 27). It is indeed true that the believer does not enter into judgment (John iii. 18), because in faith he already possesses that salvation (life) in the beginning of which its consummation is already found. In his case it is accordingly not necessary to reach a decision, whether he is to attain salvation or not, while the unbeliever is already judged, since unbelief excludes from salvation for time and eternity. But for the unbeliever the possibility of being converted remains during his whole life, a possibility that even the judgment of hardening does not exclude; and for the believer the possibility is always present, that he may fall away, from which he is not even made certain by the grace of election and the call (chap. 15). Man must accordingly make use of the time allotted him, both for the service of God (John ix. 4) and to show that he is in the state of grace. When Peter regards it as self-evident that those who died before the time of Christ are yet to have the opportunity to accept the salvation He offers (chap. xvii. 5), it will even now yet remain a religious postulate, that those who died and the preparatory grace of God has not exhausted all of its means to bring about their repentance, that then after death an

opportunity will be given to them to decide for or against redemption. But the Scriptures say nothing on this subject and do not purpose to say anything; for he who in view of this would postpone his repentance, for him this possibility would be as little a reality as is the grace of God in the judgment for him who in view of this grace continues in his sins. Nor can this be done; for from that moment in which the soul is separated from the body and thereby has been removed from the conditions of time, then, from our point of view, all possibilities of a development ceases and thereby too the history of redemption comes to an end. For us then it remains a mystery and is intended to be a mystery, what ways the grace of God may find to apply its means for the conversion of man in this case.

Certain it is that for the believer there is no new period of probation beyond the grave. For him death has no more terrors, because his sins have been forgiven, and death is accordingly no longer the punishment for sins, which delivers him into the power of the devil (Heb. ii. 14-15; 1 Cor. xv. 55-56). Not even death can separate him from the love of God (Rom. viii. 38); death does not exist for him (John vi. 50; viii. 51-52). For the true life, to which he has already attained here, cannot be annulled by death (xi. 25). The spirit that he has received is by his very nature a life-producing power (1 Cor. xv. 45; 2 Cor. iii. 6), a spirit of life, from which life is naturally reaped (Rom. viii. 2; Gal. vi. 8). For in this spirit Christ Himself lives, the eternal living Lord, in whose communion the believer will never again fall into the shadowy regions of Hades. That the soul separated from the body naturally participates in such a shadowy existence is based on the fact that only through the organic connection with the body it stood in a receptive and active connection with the earth, in whose treasures it alone found its highest good. Only he who in the exalted Son of Man and through Him in God has found a treasure

that is higher than all other treasures, only he who here already in a receptive and in an active manner has stood in an inseparable communion of life with Him, the real life of only such an one is entirely unaffected by bodily death.

Therefore Paul, having in mind the close of earthly life, says: If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness (Rom. viii. 10). The external consequence of sin, through which our earthly body can no longer be immediately changed but becomes the victim of death (chap. vii. 3), can not and shall not be changed by redemption; but the spiritual life, that was worked in us through redemption, because it is pleasing to God, is a life in the full sense of the term and that carries in itself the guarantee that it will not perish. This life can only be delivered through temporal death from all that hems and hinders it as long as it yet dwells in the flesh. Only then the soul is entirely at home with Christ (2 Cor. v. 8), because nothing that in its earthly existence drew it, now separates it from him. The soul is now united with Him (Phil. i. 23), in whom it here already possesses its one and all, for which reason death is only a gain for it (i. 21). Whether this place of dwelling together with Christ is to be considered as the place of the dead or as the heavenly paradise, is in the nature of the case a matter of indifference, since the soul when separated from the body is free from the limitations of time and space. The expression of which Jesus makes use (Luke xxiii. 43) in speaking to the thief on the cross (no matter how this term was otherwise used during that time) merely indicates the state of blessedness, which was the original possession of man as he came from the creative hand of God but which he had lost through sin and had been restored to him through the work of redemption. This blessedness Paul esteems so much higher than all the blessedness that we find already here upon earth in living communion with Christ, that he him-

self is willing to sacrifice his wish to be relieved from the painful catastrophe of death as also the wish to serve his congregations still longer, if through this bodily death he can immediately enter upon the other life (2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 21-23). It is altogether arbitrary to claim that according to Paul this blessedness is in store only for the martyrs; since it lies in the nature of the matter, that the Apostles, who expected the reappearance of Christ during their lives, could only incidentally speak of this intermediate state.

Death is called a sleep, in so far as it is to be undone again through the resurrection (1 Cor. vii. 39; xi. 30; cf. Matt. ix. 24). The self-contradictory idea of a bodily existence in this state is based on the misinterpretation of the passage 2 Cor. v. 1, 3. Death can be nothing but the condition of blessed rest, in which can rests from all bodily evils and sufferings (Apoc. xviii. 13). In so far as the impulse to receive and to act is inherent in the soul by its very nature, this can be perfectly satisfied only when the soul (through the resurrection of the body) enters upon a new kind of a world. But the waiting for this, which naturally, after the soul is separated from the body, can no longer be felt, can no longer disturb the blessedness of the perfected communion with Christ, which for the soul is the enjoyment of the highest good. Further information with reference to the life in this intermediate state is not given by the Scriptures. He who is not satisfied with what they clearly state on this subject, thereby only shows that he has not yet found in his communion with God through Christ his highest good, and that accordingly he is not yet ready for the full realization of redemption in so far as this is entered upon when death comes.

5. The Resurrection.—The final completion of redemption in the sense of the Scriptures, is naturally not yet the existence of the soul without the body, as this had to be the

case for the Jewish Alexandrian philosophy, which regarded the body as the prison of the soul and therefore a hindrance to true life. In later Judaism also, that had preserved the Old Testament religion more faithfully and had not emptied it through Greek philosophy, the hope of a bodily resurrection puts in its appearance. But in its popular form, as this is represented by Pharisaism, and was retained by the fantastic Apocalypses of later Judaism, this only produced the idea of a restoration to life upon the earth, through which men were to be enabled to take part in the final and earthly restoration of Israel. Jesus explicitly antagonizes the idea in this form (Mark xii. 24-25); by teaching that the resurrection is an entrance into a heavenly life similar to that of the angels and free from the conditions of earthly existence, and hence He evidently regarded it as a reclothing of the soul with a new body. In this sense Jesus predicted His own resurrection for which reason the disciples could not yet understand what He meant (ix. 10). Only when He appeared after the resurrection did they become convinced of this, that His heavenly life, now no longer belonging to the earth, was one in the body, which Paul can understand to be only as a body that had been transformed by heavenly glory (Phil. iii. 21), as he was convinced that he had seen Him on the road to Damascus. There accordingly was already (in Christ) a heavenly life in a glorified body, although as far as this is to be ours, it is yet hidden with Christ in God, i. e., in His counsel (Col. iii. 3). We know, that if our earthly body is dissolved (in death), i. e., if we should die before the return of the Lord, that we already possess a heavenly body, which was prepared for us already in the glorified body of Christ, even if we do secure this body only when Christ appears (2 Cor. v. 1). For through the resurrection of Christ it is settled once for all that there will be a resurrection in this sense (1 Cor. xv. 12). The omnipotence of God, which

awakened him, will also awaken us (vi. 14) in consequence of our living communion with Him (xv. 21-22); and the body which was deemed worthy of being the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit can not be forever subject to death, but must at some time again be called to life (Rom. viii. 11).

If the hope of this resurrection appears in the apostolic letters only on certain special occasions, the ground for this is to be found in the fact, that the congregations as a rule were yet expecting to live and see the coming of the Lord; but it belongs to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity (Heb. vi. 2; cf. John vi. 39-40). This doctrine has not been developed out of contemporary ideas, neither from the philosophy of the Jews, which knows nothing of such a doctrine, nor from the Pharisaic notion which Christ antagonizes, but it is based on the redemptive fact of Christ's resurrection and is therefore an essential factor in the revelation of redemption in the New Testament. At its foundation lies the presupposition found throughout the Scriptures, that there can be no life in the full sense of the word for the creative spirit without a body. Life can show itself only in activity, and for the creative spirit, which is itself not the source of all, there is need of an organ, through which it puts itself into relation to the world surrounding it, be it before or after death. It is remarkable that the modern view, that finds scarcely anything so objectionable in the apostolic proclamation as the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, likes to imagine that the blessedness in the beyond is chiefly a reunion with those we love, although such a reunion could scarcely be regarded as possible unless evinced through the organ of a new body.

For the majority of the believers who had yet expected to be living when the Lord would come again, the change to the belief in a body destined for a heavenly existence is not difficult to grasp. The change in the world that was connected with the return of Jesus, which in Matt. xix. 28

is compared with regeneration, necessarily also would change their bodies (1 Cor. xv. 50 sqq.; 2 Cor. v. 4). For this transformation the change that had taken place in the case of the earthly body of the risen Lord (chap. xiii. 1) was a suggestive example. On the other hand the first deaths in the new congregation at Thessalonica gave rise to the question, what would happen to those who had died in the meanwhile (1 Thess. iv. 13-14). Paul directs them to the fact that the returning Christ will first awaken these in order to take them together with those that are alive into His glory (iv. 15 sqq.). But for the Christians from the Greek world the idea of a restoration to life of the body that had been dissolved by decay was one they could not at all grasp and even was unpalatable (Acts xvii. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 35).

Paul seeks to teach them to regard it with greater favor by appealing to an analogy from nature. As the seedcorn decays in order that a new plant organism may grow out of it (cf. already John xii. 24), thus the earthly body must decay in order to prepare for the heavenly body (1 Cor. xv. 36 sqq.). And yet this is a different, almost opposite way from the decay of the body in the tomb. The possibility of this Paul again seeks to explain by the different kinds of bodies that exist in heaven and on earth (xv. 39 sqq.). For him it was a matter of certainty on the basis of Gen. ii, 7, that the living soul that had come into existence by God's breathing into the body made of the dust of the earth, had organized the latter into the earthly life. He concluded from this, that in the same manner the life creating spirit that is given to the believers will organize this heavenly body (xv. 44 sqq.). In this way only it was possible, that while our earthly body in many respects and always was a hindrance and a harm for the new spiritual life produced by the Spirit, this heavenly body could become completely the organ of the Spirit. Paul could of course on the basis of a revelation give no distinct idea of the nature of this

heavenly body, for which there exists no analogy in our experience. He tries to make it clear to himself and his readers in contrasting it with the earthly body by the nature of the Spirit, of which imperishability, fullness of power, and glory are attributes (xv. 42 sqq.), because the body that is organized by the Spirit will naturally partake of the characteristics of the Spirit. Especially in the matter of glory he thinks of the transcendent glory of light in which God is accustomed to dwell according to the Old Testament (Rom. iv. 4), in which the exalted Christ had appeared to him on the way to Damascus (2 Cor. iv. 4-6), and which must also be a work of the body of those that are risen from the dead, if they are to be like unto Him (Rom. viii. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 49). He regards this glory as a heavenly substance; out of which, in contrast to all things earthly, the heavenly body is formed (Phil. iii. 21).

The condition of the risen believers is described by the Scriptures as eternal life. But the idea here is not only an existence without an end, but of a life such as God lives (1 Pet. iv. 6); that is, a powerful, vigorous life, that brings to full maturity all the gifts and powers that have been given to the individual man. In this condition for the first time man can realize the dominion over the world, which had been originally set apart for him (Rom. v. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 8), which now appears in the form of a joint rule with Christ (2 Tim. ii. 12). But as these gifts and powers are individually different, a difference in the condition of men in the perfected Kingdom of God is accordingly not an impossibility (Mark x. 37; Matt. xix. 28). Those made perfect are like to one another only in the fact that they are equal in their entire sinlessness, which is pictured in the Apocalypse by the white garments with which they are clothed (Rev. xix. 8). But as together with sin the consequent evil has also ceased in the new world, thus all suffering and want also no longer exists (Rev. vii. 16-17; ii. 4-5); even

the contrast between work and rest has ceased in the everlasting Sabbath celebration which is prepared for the people of God (Heb. iv. 1). The Scriptures have no special expression for the undisturbed blessedness of this life. They picture it in figurative language taken from the highest earthly joy (Matt. viii. 11; Mark xiv. 25; Rev. xix. 9) and summarize it as glory (1 Pet. v. 10; Heb. ii. 10), which is prepared for those perfected with Christ (1 Pet. iv. 13; v. 1-4).

But the kernel of the idea is always what is also the object of true religion as such, namely, perfect communion with God, seeing God directly (Matt. v. 8; Heb. xii. 14; Rev. xxii. 4), or seeing Him from face to face (1 Cor. xiii. 12). Even John, who teaches that the Christian already enters upon eternal life when he sees God in Christ, still looks for a final perfection of this life. It is true that we have no conception of this; but we know that we are to see God (no longer as he has been revealed to us in Christ but) as He is, and that in this seeing of God our real likeness to God is to be perfected (1 John iii. 2). The book of Revelation in its most brilliant pictures of the heavenly Jerusalem, i. e., of the final consummation, emphasizes as the fundamental thought the perfected communion with God. God dwells among the perfect (viii. 15); He is the Sun, in the light of which there is eternal day (xxi. 23, 25; xxii. 5). Their chief work will be together with the angels to glorify God, as is done by the representation of the perfected congregation of God in the visions of Revelation (cf. also Phil. ii. 10).

Hereby, too, it becomes clear why the perfection of redemption is achieved only by those who have to the end striven to attain their religious goal. The rest are indeed not shut out from it by an edict of punishment, that they should not for any faults of their own be able to secure this redemption, but because this goal would not be any

blessedness at all for those who have not sought it. It is equally clear that any blessedness in which anything else than its real kernel is the main thought, be this the reunion with the beloved of this earth or the communion with the great minds of the past, has no scriptural warrant.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1. **The Origin of the Church.**—Jesus had not come to establish a church, i. e., a communion of religious life. His purpose was to realize the Kingdom of God in His nation, in which the whole natural life in all of its activity would be determined by the rule of God and He for this reason confined His work to the last to His people as a whole. He did nothing to separate His followers from the great national congregation and to organize them as a separate association. The circle of the twelve, too, whom He was preparing to send out later (Mark iii. 14) by His daily association with them and work devoted for a time exclusively to them, was by no means intended to be the nucleus of a "new Israel," as has repeatedly been stated. Only when Jesus began to entertain the thought that His people would not respond to His call and that the consummation of His work would be made possible by His death only (chap. xi. 4) He undertook the collection of a Messiah-congregation, i. e., of an association consisting exclusively of His believers in the midst of the great national communion of Israel (Deut. xxiii. 2-3; xxxi. 30; Matt. xvi. 18; xviii. 17). Thereby He naturally did not give up His original purpose; for from this smaller circle it was possible gradually to win the whole people to faith and in this way realize in them the Kingdom of God.

It was without doubt only carrying out the will of Christ, which Peter found both in the words of promise in Matt. xvi. 8 as also in the exhortation of John xxi. 15 sqq., when

on the first Pentecost he organized the newly won disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem by baptism into a separate organization (Acts ii. 38-41). This association was not, as was the case with the national congregation in Israel, bound together by the ties of blood, but by the bonds of discipleship, which made a union of all the members with the exalted Lord and Messiah, and by the participation in the one spirit that had been given them in baptism. It was a congregation of brothers, because all of the members were conscious of the fact that they were the children of the Heavenly Father and thereby brethren to each other. But it was no special religious association, since all the members took part in the services of the temple and the synagogue (Acts ii. 46; James ii. 2) which naturally did not exclude the fact that they also had in addition special devotional services of their own. Above everything else they still hoped for the conversion of all Israel, with which event they would then again become a part of the national congregation, in which this Kingdom of God would be realized in accordance with the purposes of Jesus.

Things did not change in this regard when gradually a number of new congregations of disciples were established in Palestine and neighboring countries (Acts xv. 14; xvi. 5), who however felt that they were united with each other into one large congregation by the same ties that connected the members with each other (ix. 31). As little did things change because in this growth a larger or smaller number of Gentiles were added to the fold, as Israel was long accustomed to have proselytes join their communion, in order, either in the wider sense to be received into the cultus congregation or to be received as members of the nation itself to participate in their privileges and promises. Only in reference to the difficult problem under which conditions these Gentiles whose cause was warmly advocated by Peter and James, could be received into the congregation of believers

gathered from Israel could there be a difference of opinion (cf. ch. xv.).

Things began to change first when Paul in company with Barnabas on his first missionary journey, which was undertaken originally for work in the synagogical congregations of the Jewish Dispersion (xiii. 5), discovered that the Jews on the whole rejected the gospel and that the Gentiles gladly accepted it. Through his experience on this journey Paul was convinced that he had been specially called to be the apostle of the Gentiles. The congregations that had been founded by him here and there during his second great missionary tour no longer had any connection with the national congregation of Israel, although a certain number of believers out of Israel had joined these congregations. James already, on the basis of a prophetic promise, understands this to mean that God had selected for Himself in them a new people, that was to hear His name (xv. 14). For the former Gentiles the name congregation meant an assembly which had been gathered for certain civil purposes (xix. 32, 39). Paul first applied this term to the devotional meetings for which the believers from among the Gentiles were accustomed to assemble themselves, either all who lived in a certain place (1 Cor. xi. 18; xiv. 28, 35) or as a smaller circle of those who belonged to a single household (1 Cor. xvi. 19; Rom. x. 5). From these the term was transferred to the communions that were represented in these gatherings, and which are accordingly designated as the congregation of the Thessalonians (1 Thess. i. 1) or as the congregation of Galatia (Gal. i. 2). And these congregations, too, like the national congregation of Israel had been (Num. xvi. 3) and as the congregations of Judea were (1 Thess. ii. 14), each a congregation of God, whom God had selected as His property, as the congregation found in Corinth (2 Cor. i. 1) or the one in Cenchrea (Rom. xvi. 5). These first were the real religious congregations.

But they all felt themselves united into a large communion, that constituted a new religious communion over against the unbelieving Jews and the Greeks (1 Cor. x. 32). The congregation had become the Church.

2. **The Essence of the Church.**—The church, by the fact that it belongs to God, as is everything that belongs to Him, is *holy*, especially since it consists only of saints in the sense of chap. xvi. 4 (Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 2). For all of its members are the elect of God, as their call, which caused them to be baptized (chap. xv. 4) shows. That which is said of the elect in the Jewish Diaspora congregation of Asia Minor (1 Pet. i. 1) is now naturally also applicable to the Church as a whole. They are the chosen generation, the holy nation, as Israel was of old (ii. 9). With Christ, who had promised His gracious presence to the congregation of the disciples (Matt. xxviii. 20), God makes His dwelling place in their midst (John xiv. 23). The old promises made to Israel (Lev. xxvi. 11) are fulfilled in the Church. In this way it is the temple of God (2 Cor. vi. 16; cf. 1 Pet. ii. 5; iv. 17), which Paul explains more exactly as based on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in them (Eph. ii. 22; 1 Cor. iii. 16). But as the temple of God the Church is in itself holy in all of its members (iii. 17). The marital relation, in which the Old Testament congregation stood in relation to its God, is also transferred to the relationship between the Church and Christ. As the Baptist had described himself as the friend of the bridegroom, who had sued for the bride for the Messiah (John iii. 29); and as Paul says he has united with one man, Christ, a true virgin (for a coming marriage), thus in Rev. xxii. 17, the Church is called the bride who at the marriage of the lamb as a perfect congregation is united with Him as a wife (xix. 7-8; xxi. 2, 9). And when Paul directs that the relation between husband and wife shall be modeled after the example of Christ to His congregation, he expressly states,

that Christ had given Himself for the congregation out of love, to cleanse them through baptism from all the pollution of sin and thus to consecrate them to be a worthy object of His love (Eph. v. 25).

But all of the members of this holy Church constitute an organic unity, as do the members of a body (1 Cor. xii. 12) in which each member according to its individuality serves the whole (xii. 7 sqq.; cf. Eph. iv. 7 sqq.), but the whole body serves Christ (1 Cor. xii. 27). Later Paul is fond of calling Christ the head of this body (Eph. iv. 15-16; Col. i. 18), not in the sense of a head that rules over all the members (Eph. i. 22; cf. 1 Cor. xi. 3) but in the sense, that all the members possess their organic unity only because and as long as they are united with the head. For this organic unity of the Church is brought about only through the living communion of all the individual members with Christ (Rom. xii. 5). But as this has been established by the fact that they all in their baptism have received His spirit, this spirit too can be regarded as the ground of the unity of the congregation (1 Cor. xvii. 13). A body can in the nature of the case have only one spirit (Eph. iv. 4) just as there is only one Lord in whom the members believe and in whose name they are baptized, only one God and Father, who is over all and works through them and dwells in all (iv. 5-6). On the other hand, the common participation of all the members taking of the bread that is given them in the Lord's Supper, in so far as this is the participation in the body of Christ that has been given unto death, can be regarded as being a medium of their organic union (1 Cor. x. 16-17).

As a matter of course there can be but *one* such a Church, namely, that Church which God has established through the witnesses chosen before by God (Acts x. 41), whom Jesus had already appointed to be sent out (Mark iii. 14) and whom the exalted Christ had then sent out (1 Cor. i.

17). It was their special calling to found congregations (1 Cor. iii. 10; cf. Gal. ii. 7-8) through the preaching of Christ. Just as little as there is salvation in any one else (Acts iv. 17), so little can there be a different foundation for the congregation (1 Cor. iii. 11) than Christ whom God has appointed once for all to be the cornerstone (Matt. xxi. 42; 1 Pet. i. 2, 6). The apostles have laid this foundation by preaching Him, but Christ remains the cornerstone, upon which the holy temple of the Church is built; in which all the stones are fitly framed together (Eph. ii. 20-21; 1 Pet. iv. 5-6). But this gospel of Christ is intended for all the nations (Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xiii. 10); it is preached in all the world (Col. i. 6, 23); and in harmony with its universal character is the *universal* character of the Church. In this way the Church becomes the bearer of the truth to the world, its solid basis, upon which it stands, through which the truth of the gospel redemption has found a permanent and sure existence (1 Tim. iii. 15). Jesus already has predicted that Church could not be overthrown (Matt. xvi. 18).

All of these statements, however, presuppose that all the members received into the congregation by baptism are believers, i. e., have recognized Christ as their only Lord and Mediator and have accordingly been brought completely under the influence of the Holy Ghost. This presupposition was justified, as it was scarcely thinkable under the conditions of the apostolic age that any influence other than this could induce anybody to be baptized. The occasion for baptism could be none other than the faith that had been worked by God in the call. And yet Paul already speaks of false brethren who had by false ways found their way into the congregation of Christian brethren (Gal. ii. 4); and John speaks of those who later on separated from the congregation because they had really never belonged to it (1 John ii. 19). Those who introduced into the congrega-

tion a destructive false doctrine could not possibly belong to it in truth. To these belonged the defenders of a fleshly Libertinism, who claimed to be prophets and were not (Rev. ii. 20), whose appearance in the congregation is explained in 2 Pet. ii. 1 by the typical appearance of false prophets in Israel. It was not a lack of faith (1 Thess. iii. 10) that induced the apostle to maintain, that there were also members in the congregation who were not of the elect (chap. xv. 5); but experience shows that many members of the congregation fall away from the faith, and devote all their religious interests to disputation about empty questions. And yet the apostle, evidently on account of their call through baptism, still counts them to the house of God (2 Tim. ii. 20), in which there are also wooden and earthen vessels. But even independent of this Paul, who teaches that the sanctification that had been implanted through baptism must be gradually realized, since this spirit gradually cleanses the believers of all that is not in harmony with their sanctification (chap. xvii. 2), could least of all hide from himself the truth how far, his young Gentile Christian congregations were still from that state which they should attain by virtue of their sanctification. With the progress of sanctification in the individual through the growth of the living communion with Christ, the organic unity of the congregation would as a necessary consequence be realized more and more.

But in a letter like that to the Ephesians, the outspoken purpose of which is, through admonitions to unity to protect the congregations against the inroads of an anti-Christion spirit (iv. 1 sqq.) shows that the apostle has here too in mind not only the unity in the spirit of love, but also the *unity* of the Church in that sense according to which the one character of the Church is realized in all the individuals and in all the congregations. It is clear from the first three introductory chapters of this Epistle, that a lead-

ing cause of this exhortation was found in the fact that the distinctions between the Jewish Christian and the Gentile Christian congregations were still maintained. These distinctions were in reality of such momentous character, that their removal was possible only in the course of the development that underlies the exhortations found in Rom. xv. 5-9. The great collection for Jerusalem, to which Paul had pledged himself (Gal. ii. 10) and which he persistently urged in all of his congregations, and which he in company with the representatives of the congregation in a solemn manner took up to Jerusalem, and the fact that he did not permit himself to be deterred from this by the dangers that threatened him, all this was by no means merely a work of love, but of the highest significance for the development of the Church in general. We need only to read 2 Cor. ix. 12 sqq. to be convinced that Paul understood this importance to the fullest measure.

The reasons that James on one occasion yielded the freedom of the Gentile Christians from the law (Acts xv. 14 sqq.) show clearly enough that he regarded the great Gentile Church as at bottom still a second people of God *by the side* of that found in the congregation comprised of believers out of Israel, and accordingly was not yet conscious of the unity of the Church in the Pauline sense. Even the unity of the gospel, upon which the Church was founded, could not remove this distinction. Every unprejudiced comparison of the letters of James and of John with those of Paul shows clearly enough, that this unity was by no means so commonly recognized and so clear as it should have been on this basis alone. Just as little, however, as the unity of the Church was the universality of the Church realized in the beginning. It certainly was no empty exaggeration when Paul according to his geography thought that the gospel had already been preached to all the world (Col. i. 6, 23; cf. Rom. i. 8); but how much still remained to be

done before the œcumenical character of Christianity could be realized is seen from the history of missions.

According to all this the apostolic statements concerning the character of the Church cannot be understood in any other sense than those made concerning the nature of regeneration and sanctification (xvii. 2). Not through the introduction of infant baptism, nor through the different controversies that arose in the history of the Church on account of different conceptions of its character has the *one* Church actually become to be a body so different from what it ideally should be. Those statements concerning the character of the Church in the Scriptures are and will ever be the statements of faith. Paul did not permit his vision to be darkened by the destruction between the visible and the invisible church or by any other dogmatical phrases to the fact that the real character of the Church can be realized only gradually, as this in the case with regeneration and sanctification. And yet he clings to his faith in the *one* Holy Church, united organically and universal world comprehensive. Through the preaching of Christ not only the ideal was furnished which Israel already really possessed, but the beginning was made of what was to be realized, because the means were furnished in this gospel for the realization and consummation. Exactly in this sense Jesus had declared that the Kingdom of God was already at hand and yet announced it as yet in the future (chap. xvii. 4).

3. **The Upbuilding of the Church.**—It lies in the nature of the case that the Church can realize its character only through the means through which faith and the gospel life is produced and developed in the individual (chap. xiv.), i. e., through the word and the sacraments. The Church in which the word is preached in its purity and cleanness and where the sacraments are administered in accordance with the will of Christ is indeed not the Church in which

its character has already been fully realized but is the one in which this realization can take place first. For this reason the first congregation, which was gathered by the preaching of Peter, after they had been baptized, continued steadfast in the teaching of the apostles and the breaking of bread (Acts ii. 42). But if it is to be developed into the world embracing religious organization, i. e., into the Church, then the preaching of the word must spread until all faith has been worked and all of the nations of the earth and they have by baptism been received into the congregations of disciples (Matt. xxviii. 19). As Jesus Himself strengthened His gospel message by signs and wonders, thus too He had given His first disciples, whom He had educated for its proclamation, the power to manifest the glory of God in this way (John xvii. 22; cf. Mark vi. 7; Matt. x. 1); and God has really put His seal upon their preaching as His word by signs and wonders (Heb. ii. 4). But as Jesus Himself asked and secured all of His success from the Father, thus they too were to pray to the Father for it, and to this prayer spoken in His name, i. e., by His authority, He had unconditionally promised an answer (John xiv. 13-14; xv. 16). Upon this Jesus bases His promise that they would be able to do even greater works than He, whose activity was limited by the conditions of His earthly existence (xiv. 12); that they would reap where He had only sown (iv. 37-38).

But no matter how wide the circle of the believers had thereby been drawn, He still adhered to the position that the character of the Church thus established would be developed only gradually. Paul describes the activity necessary for this development in connection with a picture of the building of God (1 Cor. iii. 9), as the upbuilding of the congregation; and He applies this expression, without any seeming connection with this picture, to every advancement of Christian life in the congregation and in the individual. In order now to enable the saints, i. e., the members of the congrega-

tion, to take part in this service of upbuilding the body of Christ, Christ has given to the congregation the bearers of certain gifts (Eph. iv. 11-12); but God has in accordance with the measure with which Christ has endowed each with His gifts, given to each the grace to help in this work (iv. 7). These are the gifts of grace, which Paul names (1 Cor. xii. 6-11), be these regarded as real miraculous gifts or only as miraculous developments of natural gifts. In this list are by no means found only those (cf. also xii. 28 sqq.) which are necessary for the preaching of the word but also those which serve to strengthen this proclamation by the working of miracles or are necessary for the management of the congregation or for the care of the poor (cf. also Rom. xii. 6 sqq.). The very fact that the Church is one organic body demands that every member possess his own gift to satisfy the different needs of the body, for which reason none is to despise his gift or to overestimate the gift of another, since they are all necessary for the body (1 Cor. xii. 14-25). If by prayer and preparation the Christian would strive for still higher gifts (xii. 31) the measure for this can only be love (1 Cor. xiii.), i. e., the question through what kind of a gift the Church would be served best (1 Cor. xiv.).

Naturally all work for the congregation as well as all missionary activity can be attended with success only when and because the Christians pray for this; for all gifts can be used only as the gifts of God, which He has entrusted to us as stewards (1 Pet. iv. 10-11), and only in the name of Christ, i. e., at the command of Christ, who has directed us to thank God in word and deed through this activity (Col. iii. 17; cf. Eph. v. 19). In reality it is Christ Himself as the head of the congregation who does this work which is performed by the members in their united service for the development and growth of the congregation (Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19). Paul does not doubt, that in this way the

congregation will grow to full manhood (Eph. iv. 13-14), i. e., will and can realize its real character. Of course this will take place only when the goal has been attained, for which reasons these gifts must continue until that time (1 Cor. xiii. 8 sqq). From this it does not follow that there must always be the same gifts; since each age has its own needs and therefore needs its own means to satisfy these needs. Certain it is, that the congregation will never lack the gift or the power to utilize the means of grace that God has given it for its upbuilding.

Notwithstanding this it is not possible that, in the course of the development of the Kingdom of God amid earthly surroundings sin will not ever again find its way in. Jesus has taught this in His parables, by showing that in His work in the establishment of the Kingdom bad fishes as well as good were caught, that there were tares as well as wheat (Matt. xiii. 47-48; xxiv. 30). He has expressly forbidden the attempt, during the course of this development, during which it is always possible that bad members would become good, and good bad, to separate these from each other, because there are no searchers of hearts on earth who could do this. With this it has for all times been forbidden the congregation to undertake, by separating its impure members, to make itself "a congregation of saints." For apart from the fact that all of its members are yet in the stage of development toward perfect holiness, it is in harmony with its character as the body of Christ that its activity should be directed to the very end of advancing the individual members in their growth and to remove their faults.

And yet it is necessary to remove the danger which is found in the individual members for the whole congregation (1 Cor. v. 6; Heb. xii. 15). Jesus Himself gave authority to the congregation, when all the means of bringing an unrepentant brother to repentance had failed, to declare that such an one had lost all the rights of Christian brotherhood;

because in this case the duty of self-preservation put a limit even upon the duty of love to save the brother (Matt. xviii. 15-17), even if he has thereby excluded him from the greatest blessing of the congregation, the forgiveness of sins. Yet Jesus has for this very case promised the congregation, be it great or small, the certainty of being heard. The prayer of the congregation also secures for the penitent brother the forgiveness of his sins (xviii. 18-19). Jesus has already endowed His disciples with the spiritual power for this, which enabled them to distinguish between mortal and pardonable sins (John xx. 22-23). Paul and John demand that Christians dissolve their social relation with those members of the congregation who have polluted themselves with grievous sins or through soul-destroying heresies might mislead others (1 Cor. v. 11; 2 John x. 17); although this does not exclude that attempts to regain them should be made (2 Thess. iii. 14-15). It is of course possible that such efforts (2 Tim. ii. 25-26) must turn out to be useless and must be given up (Tit. iii. 10-11) and that the congregation must conclude to expel these members (1 Cor. v. 2, 13). The author of the Apocalypse praises the expulsion of the soul-destroying deceivers and upbraids their retention in the congregation (Rev. ii. 2; cf. ii. 14, 20); and in the congregation to which the first Epistle of John is directed, such errorists as the libertinists were certainly compelled to leave.

But if repentance has taken place then the restoration of the sinner can and must take place (2 Cor. ii. 6 sqq.). Paul decides to make use of the sharpest disciplinary measures given him by his apostolic authority (1 Tim. i. 20), although he would apply these only in agreement with the congregation, and intends that this shall lead to the deliverance of the sinner (1 Cor. v. 3 sqq.). The New Testament has nowhere authorized a Church discipline that would arrogate to itself the right to punish the sinning members of the

congregation and forgets that in accordance with Christ's command, nothing can be done in this direction until all the means for regaining the sinner have been exhausted.

4. **The Congregational Offices.**— When Jesus warns his twelve against ambition for honors of rank and title (Matt. xxiii. 8 sqq.) He thereby did not to make it impossible that He could assign to the one or the other a prominent position in the congregation, but intended only to awaken in them that humility which seeks true greatness in serving (xx. 26-27). When the two sons of Zebedee asked Him for such a position, He did not at once refuse them, but only told them that it was not His business to give such positions, since only those could secure them for whom God (by the bestowal of proper gifts) had prepared them (xx. 23). John was nearest to His heart, but upon Peter, on account of his rock nature, he founds His greatest hopes for the establishment of His kingdom (xiv. 18), i. e., because on account of his natural abilities. Even if the manner, in which in later times the power of the Keys, i. e., for binding and loosening of that which should be permitted in the congregation, was applied (xiv. 19), does not reproduce exactly the sense of the figurative language of Jesus, it nevertheless is true that without a question, He in these words assigned to Peter a prominent position in the time of the establishment of the congregation; which fact is also confirmed clearly in John xxi. 15 sqq. But the very fact that Jesus bases this prominence on His natural abilities its transfer to His pretended successors is absolutely out of the question. The twelve also, who had been selected by Him and equipped to be His witnesses, held such prominent positions in the congregation, on account of their personal relations to Christ.

But Jesus has in no wise intended to confer upon them the exclusive privilege of preaching the word, but has purposed to make this preaching secure by calling and equipping

them. They nowhere claim for themselves exclusive privileges; and even Peter admonishes the elders of the congregation only as their fellow elder and the witness of the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. v. 1). Paul, however, called after the other apostles, was compelled by his adversaries to define more closely the position given him by his call, but he bases this position, apart from this personal relation to Christ, exclusively on his gift of establishing congregations through his faith-working proclamation of the gospel (1 Cor. iii. 10; ix. 2), i. e., on his success (Gal. ii. 8). For this reason he always considers the apostles as the first bearers of the gifts of the Church (1 Cor. xvii. 28; Eph. iv. 11). He has also yielded to the brethren of the Lord and to Barnabas the same right and privilege of preaching the gospel that he claims for himself and the original apostles (1 Cor. ix. 5-6), and he has designated the specific work of his pupil and helper. Timothy as that of an evangelist (missionary) (2 Tim. iv. 6; cf. Eph. iv. 11). But all of his letters show that he claims for himself an authoritative position over against his congregation and assistants, by virtue of which he gives them directions in the name of Christ, i. e., by His authority (2 Thess. iii. 6). In the apostolic office also, apart from the fact that nowhere distinct lines are marked out for it, there can be no successors, since it is based on the individual abilities and the historical relations of the apostles to Christ. It continues in the Church through the authoritative significance of their writings (chap. iv. 1), and requires no renewal.

It is very significant that the beginnings of the congregational office, i. e., of the official transfer of certain congregational duties to certain individuals, do not at all take place in that department in which the congregation is engaged in realizing its ideal. As the upbuilding of the congregation was left to the free use of the spiritual gifts (cf. 1 Cor. xiv), thus also the purification from the danger-

ous portion of its membership, was on the whole, although the apostles in this regard at all times claim the privilege of giving directions. On the other hand the apostles, in whose hand so far the entire management of the congregation had been placed, soon saw the necessity of appointing special agents for the management of the care of the poor (Acts vi. 1-6). From the appointment of these seven men, it seems that later the diaconate was developed (1 Tim. v. 8; Phil. i. 1; Rom. xvi. 1).

The origin of the office of elders is involved in total darkness, which office in the Jewish Christian congregation probably was a natural evolution, when the separation of the believers in the Messiah from the old adherents of the synagogue had made it necessary to appoint certain elders of their own after the manner of the synagogue. In the Gentile Christian congregations the elders seem, after the character of their work, to have been called bishops, i. e., overseers (Phil. i. 1), after the current manner that prevailed in the religious communions in the Roman Empire. At all events this office also originated solely in the needs of congregational life and was not founded upon any revealed ordinance of God. In the congregations of Corinth and Galatia this office was not found; but it did exist in the congregations in Macedonia. When Paul in Tit. i. 5 directs his assistant to appoint presbyters, it appears already from the qualifications that are to be considered in this matter and which are to be decided upon by the congregation alone, that the latter was really the power that did the electing. Their work was primarily devoted to the social life in the congregation. When it occasionally appears that they were at the same time pastors (Heb. xiii. 17), it yet seems absolutely certain, from James v. 14 sqq.; 1 Thess. v. 17 sqq., that they were those in the congregation who (on account of their age as a rule) seemed to be the most revered in the congregation, but that each member could and should per-

form the same pastoral functions that the presbyters did. Hence there was found an arrangement in Ephesus by virtue of which older widows were formally entrusted with the pastoral care of the younger women (1 Tim. v. 9 sqq.).

Only when it became evident that the period in which these spiritual gifts flourished was past and the congregation was threatened with dangerous doctrinal controversies, the need was felt to secure the constant practice and normal exercise in the preaching of the word in this way, that the effort was made to unite with the duties of the elders the office of teaching, as Paul clearly does in his Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 9; cf. 2 Tim. ii. 2). But even by this arrangement the special calling of preaching had not yet been called into existence connected with particular privileges; only that now it became the congregation's duty to make such provisions for these, too, which Paul, after the manner of Jesus (Luke x. 7), had demanded for all official preachers of the gospel (1 Cor. ix.). The laying on of hands when entering upon their duties (1 Tim. v. 27) is none other than that received by those who took care of the poor, when the blessing of God was asked down upon them when they entered upon their duties (Acts vi. 6), as also upon the missionaries, who were no permanent officials (xiii. 3). Nor did this exclude the preaching of the word on the basis of special spiritual gifts, as clearly appears from this, that the apostle in his Pastoral Epistles also forbids this to women.

The office of elders and bishops, as far as we know, continued throughout the whole apostolic period on the same footing with the congregation, and was exercised under the direction of the congregation, as it was appointed by the congregation. The discipline over presbyters in 1 Tim. v. 10 sqq., is administered by Timothy in the name of Paul. Here was the place where, after the departure of the apostles and their pupils, the need of governmental authorities was

felt in the Church, which gradually, together with the change of the work of teaching into a congregational office, brought about the change of the office of elders, which had been nothing higher than the congregation, into a monarchical episcopal office in its different stages. These were human arrangements that had been developed in the course of history, to which Christians naturally submitted themselves as to every human ordinance (1 Pet. ii. 13) for the Lord's sake. But no hierarchy can appeal to a single word in the New Testament and no spiritual office is of apostolic appointment. Only the preaching of the word as such, as also the administration of the sacrament, is based upon divine command, because it is indispensable for the realization of the essence of the Church.

5. The Hope of the Kingdom of God.—The Church is by no means the Kingdom of God as Jesus had come to establish it in His nation. This was not intended to transform the people into a purely religious communion; it was to renew the entire national life of Israel in its political, social and family relations through a religious regeneration of the people, so that the will of God would be realized in all these spheres. For this is the perfection of religion that the religious life does not become a separate side but the soul of the whole life. When Jesus confines His activity to Israel (Matt. xv. 24) and selects His twelve apostles with evident reference to the twelve tribes of Israel (xix. 28), this did not mean that the Kingdom of God was to be confined to Israel; since, according to the promises of the prophets of old, when salvation had become a reality, the nations themselves were to come and join the Theocracy in its consummation (Is. ii. 2 sqq.) But when the nation, in its head and members, had refused to accept Jesus, and when the people also as a whole had more and more hardened themselves against the preaching of the first apostles, who had continued to hope that the Kingdom of God would be

realized in Israel, then this hope became futile. The judgment of punishment, which destroyed the national and political existence of the people, has definitely pronounced their sentences. Thereby Israel has for all times lost its importance in the call to redemption. Even if the hope for the restoration of a remnant of Israel (Rev. ix. 13) or of a final repentance of the whole people (Rom. ix. 26) was entertained, yet the hope of a restitution of Israel to its historical mission is an empty dream, which is based on a false conception of the character of prophecy, the liberal fulfilment of which is demanded.

The Kingdom of God which Jesus was to found in accordance with prophetic prediction and which He also wanted to found, has not been realized and cannot be realized. This not for the reason that He or the Prophets entertained fanatical hopes, but because the fulfilment of all the promises of God is made dependent on the conduct of those to whom they are given. Jesus already thought of the possibility that the Kingdom of God would be taken from Israel and given to the Gentiles (Matt. xxi. 43). This possibility has become a reality. The great apostle to the Gentiles became the instrument that brought salvation to the Gentiles, after it had been rejected by the Jews (Rom. xi. 11). It is true that the believing Gentiles have thereby been engrafted on the noble oil-tree, the roots of which are the patriarchs (xi. 16 sqq.; cf. Eph. ii. 12-13, 19) and now constitute the true Israel (Rev. vii. 3-8; xiv. 1-3); but the ideal theocracy with its promises and blessings has as little to do with the actual people of the Jews as the 144,000 from all the tribes (who at that time no longer existed) have, as this is only the typical designation of the New Testament people of God. With the transition of the Kingdom of God into the sphere of the heathen world, the Church is for the present the only form in which this ideal has been realized in a communion. The natural political, social and political

life of the Gentiles did not offer a basis for this realization of the Kingdom of God among the nations, as did the national life of Israel, that had been trained by divine revelation. In itself such a realization is not an impossibility. But a Church, which would identify itself with the Kingdom of God and thereby injure its deepest religious being, could not and would not solve this problem.

And yet notwithstanding all this, the realization of this goal is predicted by both New Testament prophecy as well as by that of the Old Testament. He who understands the nature of prophecy and does not confound it with prediction, will not consider the picture of the millenium given by Rev. xx. as a fantastic dream of the prophet. At a time when the hostility against God had seemingly reached its highest stage in the Roman Empire, the writer of the Revelation had hoped that the returning Christ would crush this empire; and because thereby all the powers of Satan would seem to be bound for the time being, that He would in company with his faithful realize the Kingdom of God on earth. This kingdom could become the priestly Mediator to them to realize the kingdom among those that had not yet been reached by the gospel and had not yet been hardened against it (xx. 6). This would gain that importance for the whole world which at one time Israel was to have. That Christ was to descend upon the earth for the purpose of establishing and ruling this kingdom is an idea not suggested by the writer; the royal dominion of the exalted Christ serves here as everywhere else merely to realize His glory. But a Kingdom of God upon earth can never be its last realization. Therefore the writer of the Revelation assigns to this rule only a period of thousand years (naturally a round number), after which time, with the attack of the people that have not yet been brought under its influence in the outermost ends of the earth (xx. 7 sqq.) the final catastrophe breaks in upon the Kingdom of God.

The presuppositions of the prophet have not been fulfilled and therefore, too, his picture of hope has as little been realized as have those of the Old Testament prophets. But he has by his picture given Christianity the right to pray and to work for the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth among the nations. How far the Church will be able to attain this goal in the different nations in the world at large and thus entirely to Christianize the life of the people in the full sense of the term, depends upon the extent to which the real character of the Church is realized in itself and on the extent to which the nations accept its missionary activity. At any rate, the ideal can be realized only to a relative degree under the conditions that prevail in the life on earth, in which the power of sin is indeed hemmed but has not been destroyed; and the Church can never become the Kingdom of God; or as this can be stated, the Church will never become the state.

For the Church is and will remain the communion of religious life, in which the work to be done is to plant, cultivate and bring to maturity this life. But the Kingdom of God embraces the entire life of man, the economic and the national, the social and the political; it includes the arts and the sciences, as well as all the forms of human culture and dominion over nature. This totality of life can become under the influence of the Kingdom of God only to that degree to which it is ruled by religious motives, is developed according to religious norms, is led to religious ends, so that in everything the will of God is accomplished. But all these elements of religious life can be produced and be cultivated only in the Church as the communion of the religious life. The Church is at all times the hearth where that sacred fire is fed which is to transfuse, sanctify and purify the life of the world. The Church will cease to exist only in the Kingdom of God in heaven (Rev. xxi. 22).

CHAPTER XX

THE LAST THINGS

1. **The Return of Christ.**—From that time when Jesus began to foretell to His disciples His own sufferings and also the heavy fate that awaited them, He announced to them His return to glory (Mark viii. 38). He could not be the Messiah sent by God if He did not actually realize the promised completion of redemption. If His work on earth was cut short by the sins of His people then He had to continue it in His exaltation. As the Father had sent him to begin His work, thus He had to send Him a second time to complete it; since it was God's work that had to be accomplished by the Messiah. The prophets of old had spoken of a Day of Jehovah (Joel ii.; Mal. iii.; cf. Heb. x. 25), when He would return to bring the consummation of salvation; and this could only be the day, when at His second coming (Acts iii. 20-21) the Messiah, who is now hidden in heaven, would be revealed in His glory (1 Cor. i. 6-7; Phil. i. 6). Only then could the prophecy of Daniel be fulfilled (Dan. vii. 13), according to which He was to come like the Son of Man in the clouds of the heavens, in order to establish His dominion over the completed Kingdom of God (Mark xiv. 62). The company of the angels (Matt. xxv. 31) was only to show that He was not returning in humility as a man but in divine glory.

On this day then the prophetic prediction was being fulfilled, and now only had the promised advent of the Messiah become His real presence (James v. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 23) or the presence of God Himself (1 John ii. 28). Therefore

this return of Christ is technically called His "Parousia." The Old Testament prophets had as a matter of fact predicted nothing concerning the concrete forms of the first coming of Christ, although in later times attempts have been made to find in them references to these. Just as little have Christ and the New Testament prophets said anything concerning the forms of this return, but have pictured them only in the manner of Old Testament prophecy. But so much is certain, that the second coming will not, like the first, be one that can be grasped by faith only, but it will be made known to all the world at the same time, just as Jesus represents it (Matt. xxiv. 24), since it will practically bring the final decision of the fate of the world.

But if Jesus really was the Messiah, whom God had sent in accordance with His promises, then God must have intended to give His full redemption with His first advent to the generation to whom He was sent. Jesus could, then, according to the prophecy that He was sent to fulfil could not believe, that if His work on earth was cut short by the sins of His people, that God would complete it by sending Him a second time to this generation. It is perfectly useless by exegetical and critical means to get rid of the fact that Jesus had promised His return to the generation of His day (Mark ix. 1; xiv. 62; Matt. xxiv. 34). All His discourses with reference to His return proceed from the standpoint that His hearers as a class would yet live to see His return (cf. also John xiv. 3; xxi. 22). It would otherwise also be historically beyond comprehension, that all apostolic preaching expected it in the near future (James v. 8-9; 1 Pet. iv. 5 sqq.; Heb. x. 25, 37; Rev. iii. 11; xxii. 20; cf. i. 3; xxii. 10). Paul hopes with the majority of the believers to see the return (1 Thess. iv. 15-16; 1 Cor. xv. 52); and he adheres to the near approach of this return even when thought of His martyrdom came nearer and stronger (Phil. ii. 17; iv. 5). John knows that the last

hour is already at hand and expects with his readers to live to see the return (1 John ii. 18, 28).

This naturally did not make it impossible that within this period the actual movement of the final consummation should remain unknown (Acts i. 7); that the day of the return should come suddenly and unexpectedly, as a thief in the night (Matt. xxiv. 43-44; cf. 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3). Sometimes the admonition is given not to expect it too soon in order not to be deceived through false reports (Luke xvii. 23; cf. 2 Thess. ii. 2); sometimes not to doubt on account of the delay (Luke xii. 45; cf. 2 Pet. iii. 9). This very certainty with reference to the nearness of the return, united with the uncertainty as to the exact moment, became for the apostolic views the strongest impulse for watchfulness, without which there is no development of Christian life (chap. xviii. 2). Living constantly in the expectation of the coming of the Lord should and could enable them to continue their personal relation to the Lord who had been taken from them and exalted to the heavens.

As certain as it accordingly is, that the divine providence, according to which Jesus was compelled to expect His speedy return, had its special redemptive purposes, so certainly, too, is it wrong to speak of a mistake on the part of Jesus or even of a self-deception in reference to the success of His work. When He in Mark xiii. 37 says that the determination of the day of His return is unknown to Himself, He certainly did not believe that God, who had revealed to Him all the other counsels of redemption, would withhold the single one concerning this day. But rather He will have thought, that God had not revealed to Him this matter, because He had reserved for Himself the determination of the exact time. Thereby it was settled that God could postpone the day of His return to also beyond the period when Jesus and the prophets had expected it, if such were the counsels of His grace. The

whole outcome of His career upon earth was a proof of the fact that if the conduct of man hindered God from attaining His purposes in the way originally intended, He could select other ways.

Under existing circumstances Jesus had a right to expect that only a few would attain salvation (Matt. xxvii. 14; cf. Luke xii. 32), and that, if this was true of the people of Israel who had been prepared by the history of redemption, He would find the world as a whole, living in careless impenitence at His return (Matt. xxiv. 37 sqq.; cf. Luke xvii. 8). It is true that He had at the approach of His death pointed to the sign of Jonah as indicative of His resurrection (Matt. xii. 39-40), that would lead many to faith in Him (cf. also John viii. 28). The apostles had tried by the preaching of the resurrection of Jesus to work the repentance of all Israel (Acts iii. 19 sqq.); but they had failed. What was then more natural than the thought that God would postpone His original counsel with reference to the return, in order to give the world time to repent. If Jesus had at one time only thought of this, that His disciples, when they would be brought before rulers and kings, would be given an opportunity to testify of Him to the Gentiles (Matt. x. 18), Mark has already enlarged this to the thought, that before His return the gospel must yet be preached to all the nations (xiii. 10; xiv. 9). And of this the first evangelist no doubt thought when he reports the exalted Christ as giving the command in Matt. xxviii. 19. Paul teaches that God's judgment of wrath over Israel, which is to come with the return of Christ, is postponed, in order to find room for the call of the Gentiles through the gospel (Rom. ix. 22-23). He has announced it as a revelation given to him, that when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have entered, that then the people of Israel also is to be saved (xi. 25-26), and then the end is to come at once (xi. 15). And yet it is true that he had clung to the idea

of the near return of Christ (xiii. 11); but we certainly know that already at the time when he wrote this Epistle to the Romans, he regarded that gospel as having already been preached to all the world (i. 8). Evidently he hoped at that time yet, that the work of evangelization of the Gentiles would continue to make the phenomenal progress with which it had been begun; and that, when this was finished, that Israel, in accordance with the wonderful counsel of God, the fulfilment of which he expected in the Gentile world, would be roused to follow the example and become converted (xi. 11, 13, 14).

At a later period, indeed, after he had been suffering imprisonment for four years, we see that his hopes weakened, and he can only with tears think of the many for whose conversion he had once hoped (Phil. iii. 18). The author of the Revelation sees in the mighty judgments of God, which according to the predictions of Jesus concerning the end were to go out of the world, like the travails out of which the new age had been born (Matt. xxiv. 6 sqq.; cf. Rev. vi. 8-9; xv. 16), the last admonitions of God for the repentance to the world, which however, are scarcely expected to have any results (ix. 20-30; xvi. 9; xi. 21). But the nearer the congregation progressed toward its full development, the more the Church must in itself have constituted a powerful propaganda for faith in Christ (John xvii. 21, 23). It is true that in the Church itself, in the course of its further growth, each development came to the surface; but over against these very things we are told in 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15, that the postponement of Christ's return is to serve the purposes of giving all the time to repent and to be saved. It was dependent on the Christians, by their timely repentance to hasten the coming return (iii. 17). Evidently the primitive congregation comforted themselves with the thought, that God had given the world a longer time to repent; for the failure of Christ to return

again during that generation did not shake its faith that Jesus was the Messiah.

2. **The Anti-Christ.**—If God through the second sending of Christ brings about this consummation it is thereby settled that this is not attained by way of an internal development of the work that has been begun by Christ. The parables in Matt. xiii. 31 sqq. speak only of the purpose of the Kingdom of God to include and to transform the whole nations, without a word being said of and in how far this is attained. The parable in Mark iv. 26-29, unless it is allegorical in an arbitrary manner, describes merely the fact that this is an independent and gradual development. Nothing is more certain then that Jesus did not have in view a victory over the world in our sense of the term. He had hoped to gain a small flock, as we saw, for whose deliverance from the power of the enemy He would come again. For nothing is more certain than that, the more the Kingdom of God began to be realized, the stronger the reaction of the hostile world must become (1 John iii. 13). Already in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus began to speak to His disciples of their persecutors (Matt. v. 11); the more the hate of the world fell upon Him, the more surely His followers must experience it too (John xv. 18 sqq). Mark considers the persecutions that Jesus had prophesied to His disciples as the signs of the end of the world (Mark xiii. 9-13). Peter sees in them the beginning of the judgment in the house of God (1 Pet. iv. 17). Paul also expects terrible oppression, which will come over the faithful (1 Cor. vii. 26). Above all it is a fundamental thought in the Revelation of John that the faithful shall indeed be preserved from the judgment that is passed over the hostile world (vii. 2 sqq; cf. ix. 4) but that a great tribulation (vii. 14) yet awaits them in the last times of persecution.

Jesus and His disciples saw the near approach of the last times not in the progress of Christianity, but in the

growth of the hostility against it, in the development of anti-Christianity. Jesus in Matt. xxiii. 31-36 presupposes in an undoubted manner, that the judgment that is to come in the end, can come only when the present generation has filled the measure of the sins of their fathers, i. e., when the hostility against God and His salvation has reached its acme, because only then it can be determined that there is no hope left of gaining the world for salvation. The greater this enmity grows, the more the believers can hope that the end is near. And in order that they may prepare themselves for this, Jesus taught His disciples to interpret the signs of the times (Luke xii. 56 sqq.), from which it is possible to see the approach of the end. In this the New Testament prophet sees the duty to judge from these signs of the times, what stages the development of the hostility to God has yet to pass through before the world is ripe for the judgment. Apocalyptic prophecy, which sought on the basis of this stage of this development to discover whether the end was near or far off, is a kind of a philosophy of history, which is not to be regarded as something foreign to the religion of the New Testament, because it is also found outside of Christianity.

Jesus Himself has set the precedence for this. If His miraculous deliverance from death and His consequent exaltation was the last means that God resorted to in order to bring the people of His times to repentance and to faith (Matt. xii. 39-40; John viii. 29), then the rejection and the persecution of the witnesses who proclaimed this act of God is the sign that the leaders of the people had completed the sins of their fathers and that the judgment must come over them (Matt. xxii. 32-36). When the people were misled by false Messiahs (xxiv. 5) and would have rejected salvation as it was brought to them by Jesus, and have in a revolutionary manner tried to force redemption in its sense, then the catastrophe would break out over them (xxiv. 15-21)

from which only the returning Messiah would deliver His followers (xxix. 29 sqq.). Therefore the Epistle to the Hebrews sees in the signs of the impending Jewish wars the approach of the great day of the Lord (Heb. x. 25).

In the time when the activity of the great apostle of the Gentiles everywhere met among the unbelieving Jews with a strong and energetic opposition movement (1 Thess. ii. 15-16), Paul saw in this already the essence of that iniquity (2 Thess. ii. 7) which had hidden itself in the garb of a zeal for God and His law, but necessarily would soon grow into a full apostasy from God and from the Messiah who declared His will. This acme he saw reached when the man of iniquity would seat himself in the temple of God (ii. 3-4), i. e., would declare himself to be the God who had come to his Messiah. As an instrument of Satan, endowed with superhuman powers (ii. 9), this pseudo-Messiah would certainly overthrow the Roman law, which had protected the apostles so often in the past against Jewish fanaticism (ii. 6-7); and when then the hostility against God and Christ would have reached its highest stage, then the coming of Christ would put an end to this power of the anti-Christ (ii. 8-9).

Soon indeed it appeared that the unbelieving Jews, who are called the synagogue of the devil in Apoc. ii. 9; iii. 9, did not possess the power to produce out of its own midst this last personification of anti-divine hatred; and Paul himself never again expressed his views in this manner, but finally even expects the conversion of the Jews as a people (Rom. xi. 26). On the other hand, it was later the Roman Empire itself that kept the apostles in chains and prisons for long years; and in the horrors of the persecutions under Nero, as also in the murder of Peter and of Paul, showed itself as the bearer of the specific hostility to Christ. It is true that the great enemy of Christianity, Nero, finally himself died, and with the destruction of the Julian line the

Roman Empire seemed to have received its death blow, from which it did not recover for a long time. But when by the ascent upon the throne of Vespasian and of the family of the Flavians this wound was healed, then John saw that the hour had come, when after the seven headed rule the beast, i. e., the Roman Empire would in the last representatives of the Flavians develop the highest stage of hostility to Christ and thereby inaugurate the final catastrophe (Rev. xii. 17).

But this combination, too, was not fulfilled, since Domitian did not at all justify the fears that were entertained of him. But the Apocalypse itself, which already had placed by the side of the Roman Empire the power of pseudo-prophecy as a second beast, knows of a satanic pseudo-prophecy within the congregation itself, that purposes to lead it into heathen libertinism (ii. 20-24). In 2 Pet. ii. 1 sqq. already the fear is expressed that the development of practical libertinism into theoretical (ii. 17 sqq.) is the greatest danger for the last times, which Paul also sees approaching in the general moral degeneracy (2 Tim. iii. 1 sqq.; cf. Matt. xxiv. 11-17). John believed later that in the false doctrines of Gnosticism the pseudo-prophecy of the last times and with it the anti-Christ had come, from whose appearance he concludes that the last hour is at hand (1 John ii. 18, 22; 2 John vii.).

We have here a new proof that the apostles themselves have no fear to give up an expectation formerly entertained and to see in a new phenomenon the final personification of the hostility to Christ. What independent positions they took in reference to expectations of the future is seen from the way in which John sees the expectation of a personal anti-Christ that had already become current in his own times, fulfilled in the appearance of a number of false doctrines, as he himself says. Modern interpreters try in vain to oppose the clear statements on this subject, because they

have made the former view a part of their dogmatical system. This is based, as is the whole dogmatical conception of the New Testament Apocalypse, which cannot possibly be forced into one uniform doctrine of the events of the last times, upon a false idea of what New Testament prophecy really is. This, as little as Old Testament prophecy, is a prediction of future events; but it could, if it wanted to, using the pictures given by the prophets through divine inspiration of the hopes of the future for the consolation and the exhortation of their generation in an effective manner, take its forms only from the circumstances of its own times. When these changed, then it, too, had to change, exactly as this is done by Old Testament prophecy. As a matter of fact neither gnostic heresy nor the Roman Empire gave Christianity its last battle. Christianity has done perfectly right when it began to interpret the signs of the times successively in Mohammedanism and then in the Papacy, and then in the [French] revolution as the acme of anti-Christianity; but it was a mistake to find these interpretations in the Revelation. What will in reality prove to be the extreme development of the hostility to Christ, can naturally be determined only then when the end has come.

3. The Final Judgment.—The prophecy of the Old Testament always predicts that in connection with the great day of Jehovah the judgment will come over the enemies of Israel and over all the iniquity in its midst. This was the judgment that John the Baptist announced in order to persuade Israel to a change of heart, since the Messiah must first root out those who are unworthy of redemption from among the people in order to establish the kingdom with the others (Matt. iii. 10, 12). But Jesus had not come to judge but to save (John iii. 16-17). Measured by His standards all were unworthy of redemption. The Messianic judgment had to be postponed till His work was finished (Matt. xiii. 41-43, 49-50). This completion came only

when He returned. In the prophecies of Jesus this return is accompanied by signs in the heavens, which without a doubt would bring about the collapse of the present order of the world (Matt. xxiv. 29). Such an end of the world is also presupposed by Jesus elsewhere (Matt. v. 18; xiv. 35); and upon it is based the promise of the return, which is compared with the advent of the deluge (Matt. xxiv. 37-42). In 2 Pet. iii. v. sqq., it is described as brought about by the fire of divine wrath, since the earth is secured by the promise of God (Gen. ix. 11) against another deluge. Paul also knows that the present world is in the process of decay (1 Cor. vii. 31); and the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the end, when this changeable form of the world (i. 11-12) will be for the last time put into motion in order to make room for one that cannot be changed (xii. 26 sqq.). This is a natural consequence of the fact that with the return of Christ the final consummation for the believers and thereby also the final judgment has come as to who belongs to them. If the history of mankind thereby ends, then with it also comes to an end the form of the world which cannot be thought without the former and which only exists for it. For this reason already no conception can be formed of the return of Christ, which could be adjusted to our ideas drawn solely from our experiences in the present earth (Chap. xx. 1), since the return changes all the conditions of life upon this earth. Amid the terrors of the destruction of the world, which all will experience, only the believers will be delivered and will be gathered around the returning Christ, who will take them into His kingdom of perfection (Matt. xxiv. 31; cf. also 1 Thess. iv. 17; John xiv. 3).

The final decision that has with this been made of the fate of man can naturally only be thought in the form of a judgment, in which all the nations will be gathered before the throne of God or of Christ (Matt. xxv. 31-32), because

God will judge the world through Him (Rom. ii. 16), who as the Mediator of redemption has brought salvation and redemption. When it is said that the apostles and the believers in general are to take part in this judgment (Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 2), this naturally only says that the decision is made dependent on the conduct of men over against the preaching of the apostles, and that the believers will testify how it was possible through the right conduct over against the gospel to attain redemption. Only in this sense does Jesus speak of a participation of the Ninevites and the queen of Sheba in the final judgment (Matt. xii. 41-42). As a matter of fact in this final judgment only the fact is definitely made known what the result of the development so far has been. For the believer who has actually already attained redemption does not come into the judgment (John iii. 18; v. 24), and the unbeliever has through his rejection of redemption excluded himself from such (Matt. iii. 18; xii. 31).

The fact that this judgment is final in its character makes it impossible that in some way or other all men are to be saved. The idea of such an Apocatastasis is made impossible by the New Testament doctrine of election, according to which only single persons are elected to salvation (Chap. xv.). It also contradicts the statement of Christ concerning a sin, for which there is no forgiveness (Matt. xii. 31-32), i. e., of a final hardening against redemption, as also contrary to the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews of a final apostasy of those who had already received redemption (vi. 4 sqq.; x. 26 sqq.). Such a doctrine undermines the fundamental idea of the Scriptures, according to which every one is responsible for his own final fate and that salvation will be not forced upon any one, which would also be contrary to the character of redemption. Such passages as John xii. 22; Eph. i. 10, speak only of the universal will of God for the redemption of mankind; and if according to Rom. xi.

25 the conversion of all Israel is to take place, after the fulness of the Gentile world has entered, then, in accordance with the purpose of the connection of this section, this refers only to the nations as such, which does not at all exclude the idea of a hardening of individuals. Just as in Rom. xi. 30 sqq. it is a matter of certainty for everybody who does not search for dogmatical formulas in the Scriptures, but would explain the Scriptures in their connection, that the apostle is here speaking only of the Gentiles that have become believers and of the unbelieving Jews but not of all individually. Just as little does the fact, that in the end all the powers hostile to Christ will be overthrown (1 Cor. xv. 24-25) demand a conversion of all men. For in this passage, to say the least, the superhuman power of evils are also included, of whose conversion the Scriptures never say a word. And if in the end God is to be all in all (Rom. xv. 28) this, according to the connection, is only to be the contrast of the perfected Kingdom of God to the rule of Christ as Mediator, through which the former is established, but for this reason can refer only to those who through faith in Christ have become His subjects.

For all others no other fate is then in store except that which the New Testament calls eternal destruction and everywhere places in contrast to the deliverance from the same (Phil. i. 28; cf. 1 Cor. 1, 18). A destruction of the wicked in the sense of their being devoured by divine wrath (Heb. x. 27; xii. 29) cannot be found in the Scriptures, if according to the words of Jesus it would be better that such persons were never born (Mark xiv. 21). The Scriptures everywhere presuppose as self-evident that the soul lives after death; the only question is at all times how to save the soul from destruction (Matt. x. 39). But bodily death is for him, who thereby is separated from everything that for him is the highest good in itself the greatest misery (Chap. vii. 3). This begins immediately after death and, ac-

according to Luke xvi. 24 is described as a burning thirst. If the desire of the soul for that which is for it the highest good remains unsatisfied for ever, then this is the eternal torment of the damned (Rev. xiv. 10-11; cf. Mark ix. 48, according to Is. lxvi. 24), and their eternal punishment (Matt. xxv. 41, 46; 2 Thess. i. 9). What is called the second death in Rev. xx. 6, 15 is merely the definitively settled condition of death. The designation of this condition as hell's fire (Matt. v. 22) or as the deepest darkness, in which there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. viii. 12) already shows through the contrast in which it is placed, that these are only the current symbolical pictures of eternal misery, which divine wrath inflicts upon the lost. Passages like Matt. v. 29-30; x. 28 do not refer to bodily torments in hell, but to this, that the sinner while yet in this life is judged, since here as in all cases the present generation is regarded as the objects of the judgment.

It has indeed been thought that this is contradicted by the scriptural doctrine of a universal resurrection, through which the godless also receive bodies again that can be subject to such torments. But the passages that are cited as teaching this doctrine proceed only from the thought, that the final judgment is universal in its character and thus decides definitely the fate of the living and the dead (Acts x. 42; 1 Pet. iv. 5). If this is described as a special act of judgment, then, too, those who are dead must be regarded as having come from the tomb and as placed in this judgment, and receiving their final sentence (John v. 29). This appears especially from the plastic description (Rev. xx. 17-13), which describes the eternal fate of the condemned only as the second death (xx. 6, 15). Luke, too, who in Acts xxiv. 15 speaks of a resurrection of the just and the unjust, which, however, according to v. 16, manifestly only is an evidence that these will receive their judgment, undoubtedly presupposes in his gospel (xx. 35-36)

that there is a resurrection from the dead only for those who are to be considered worthy of a heavenly life (cf. xiv. 14). That a double resurrection can only by forcible means be taken from passages like 1 Thess. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 23-24 is now generally recognized. If death as the last enemy is overcome only immediately before the end (1 Cor. xv. 26) then by this the idea is excluded that this is to be a double conquest over death by two resurrections, which have perhaps been separated by the millennium. Everything that Paul says in 1 Cor. xv. 35-55 concerning the manner of the resurrection fits only to the resurrection to eternal life (cf. Phil. iii. 21), just as Jesus too spoke only of such (Mark xii. 25).

It can only be based on a misunderstanding of the Scriptures if their statements concerning the eternal character of the punishments in hell are found irreconcilable with the love of God. The Scriptures nowhere teach that God inflicts an equivalent punishment for their sins upon the condemned according to any codex of criminal law. As there is but *one* blessedness, which consists in nothing else than that for which the godless never long, in which he would find no happiness, thus too there is but *one* punishment in hell, which consists in the exclusion from this blessedness, the continuance in death. To this that man condemns himself, who on earth has not sought and found the greatest good, and in this all the grace of God can make no change, no matter how much one may trust this grace to find inexhaustible means for bringing the rebellious man to salvation, and God's wisdom to discover ways to apply these, even beyond the boundaries that have been drawn for the end of human history and human development.

If God in His wisdom has made man after His image, and with ability and freedom to decide for himself as far as his salvation is concerned, then too He has given him

the ability to reject it permanently; and the final judgment can only determine which side he has chosen.

4. **The New World.**—It has often been maintained that the eschatological ideas of the New Testament consist only of an odd mixture of irreconcilable pictures, that were taken from contemporaneous notions and therefore have in reality nothing to do with the religion of the New Testament. This is not at all the case. It is true that there has been a comprehensive change in the ideas concerning the last things, which are found in the Apocalypse, when this book does not make the return of Christ the final end but only as the beginning of the millennium of Christ's rule upon earth. This must of course have been preceded by a judgment as to who have been the true disciples (xx. 4) and as such is to take part in this rule. The resurrection in this case is then indeed only the resurrection to an earthly life, as Israel had hoped for all of the dead, when the kingdom of the Messiah would be realized in the form of the Old Testament theocracy. But the first by no means excludes the second resurrection, since before the final judgment, which will condemn some to a second death, and bring others into the heavenly Jerusalem, the old world will disappear (xx. 11) and with it the Kingdom of God on earth. We have seen that according to John this hope is realized in this way, that all the forces hostile to God and to Christ are concentrated in the Roman Empire, the overthrow of which, because it represents to him the acme of human iniquity, could be expected only through the returning Christ (Chap. xx. 2). The Roman Empire has shown itself as the special persecutor of the Christians; but it went to pieces without the intervention of Christ, and even in the end accepted Christianity, without however thereby realizing the rule of God upon earth, as this has often been thought necessary by those who do not understand the nature of Christianity. With this hope of a millennium upon earth,

as this has been described by the Revelation, has fallen to the ground, but thereby its religious significance has not been lost (cf. Chap. xix. 5).

Perfectly useless are all the efforts to force such an idea upon the Apostle Paul, who never entertained it. He explains more clearly how it happens, that, although the resurrection of Christ is a pledge of the resurrection of the believers (1 Cor. xv. 21-27) that nevertheless those that are His shall only arise when He comes again (xv. 23). Only then, namely, he says, when the final consummation has come, when after the final victory over all His enemies, which God has promised Him in Ps. cx. 1, death has also made His last enemy powerless (xv. 24 sqq.). First sin, which the hostile powers try again and again to bring into dominion, has been definitely conquered, then death too which is the consequence and the punishment of sin, can be robbed of all of its power over the redeemed. Just as little as the end of which he speaks can be the end of the resurrection in the return to life of the godless, so little can the period of His rule and victory, in which He will subdue all those who resist His rule, begin only with the return of Christ. For the royal rule of Christ according to Paul (cf. Col. i. 13) and the whole New Testament begins already with His exaltation and not with His second coming. Paul himself formerly made a distinction between this intermediate rule and the point of time when after the completion of His work He will restore this government to God again (1 Cor. xv. 24) in order to be henceforth only the first born among His brethren (Rom. viii. 29). But this does not and cannot say that with this period the exaltation of Christ to divine dignity and the government of the world ceases, since the completion of His rule as the Mediator is not the cause but the result of this. Thereby it is not made impossible that the completed Kingdom of God also (1 Cor. xv. 28) can be designated as a rule of God or of Christ (2 Tim.

iv. 1, 18; cf. 2 Pet. i. 11). In every expression of the idea of a transfer of supremacy to God (1 Cor. xv. 24), as v. 28 clearly shows, only the certainty is expressed, that the completion of the mediatorial activity just as much takes place in the subjection to the divine counsel of redemption as this is also true of the entire work (Chap. xiii. 3).

The strongest reason why the resurrection of the believers can take place only in the return of Christ, as Paul had from the beginning maintained (1 Thess. iv. 16) as also the change of those that are alive into bodies suitable for a heavenly existence (1 Cor. xv. 51-52), is to be found in this, that only with the destruction of the old form of the world the new world will arise, which is the goal of all Christian hope. Here it is made definitely clear, that there is no reason for believing, that the expectation of a return of Christ had only been developed because the hopes for the establishment of an earthly rule of the Messiah had not been fulfilled in the life of Jesus. In the Old Testament such an expectation had no grounds, since it knows of only *one* coming of the Messiah. Apart from the Revelation, in which the return is nothing else than the restoration of the rule of David as predicted by the prophets, the New Testament too knows nothing of the return of Christ for the purpose of establishing a rule upon earth. The Messianic period, which Israel expected with the advent of the Messiah, the beginning of which, in so far as this had not taken place already at the first coming of Christ (Chap. xvi. 2), especially according to Paul, is regarded as beginning with the second coming of Christ, will not find the world any more in its old form of existence.

In the Apocalypse also the new Jerusalem, which had been prepared by the counsel of God from all eternity, descends down from heaven (xxi. 1; v. 10), but not to realize the completion of blessedness here upon the earth; for the heaven and earth, as we know them, will then no longer

be in existence (xx. 11); a new heaven and a new earth (2 Pet. iii. 13, according to Is. lxxv. 17) will have taken their places. This expression, taken from the first world that was created, is indeed inaccurate; in the completed Kingdom of God there is no difference between the heaven and the earth. That which we call heaven is nothing else than the place of the undisputed dominion of God, for which Jesus teaches us to pray: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. vi. 10); and in the perfect Kingdom of God this will be realized. When Jesus directs us to pray to the God whose throne is in heaven (Matt. vi. 9), although He rules everywhere, He wishes thereby only to designate a place where His power is supreme. But those that are made perfect have already attained this, that they see God in all of His glory. He dwells in their midst, as the Apocalypse again and again describes in glowing colors (Chap. xviii. 5). The dwelling places of man, which we call the earth, have in their perfection themselves become a heaven. Therefore this perfection is generally called the heavenly, because everything mortal and finite has ceased there. The bodies too which we have received in the resurrection must also partake of the nature of heavenly perfection, and therefore this resurrection cannot take place until with the return of Christ this new heaven has come also. Jesus has said that in the resurrection we will be like the angels (Mark xii. 25); Paul describes all the spiritual creatures, men and angels, in the end as united under Christ as their head (Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10).

But the brute creation also is a creation of God, which, because it is intended for the good of man, must also participate in his perfection (Rom. viii. 19). Paul says, evidently with reference to Gen. iii. 17-18, that in consequence of sin, it is subject to the vanity, the uselessness, which now constitutes its being; but on the hope that once, when with the redemption from sin the purpose of this subjection

has been attained, then it will also be freed from this state of vanity that results from its state of subjection. When the children of God have once passed through their resurrection into the stage of heavenly glory and have been delivered from the vanity and the resultant uselessness, then too the brute creation must be to undergo a similar transformation (Rom. viii. 20-21). Again and again the author of the Revelation employs in his description of the heavenly Jerusalem pictures that he has taken from the account of Paradise (ii. 7). The state of nature, as this was destined in the first creation for man, was realized in the Garden of Eden, in which man lived in a sinless condition. Through sin, which made it impossible for man to attain the full supremacy over nature in him and around him, this was lost again; but it will in the regeneration of the world (Matt. xix. 28) be restored again when a new heaven and a new earth will have been created.

These are not fantastic dreams. This hope is deeply embedded in the religion of the New Testament. A real life in the full sense of the word cannot for this reason be considered as possible without a body, because it would not be effective without an object of its activity. Paul promises to the saints a dominion in eternal life (Rom. v. 17), even a joint rulership with Christ (2 Tim. ii. 12); and the object of this rule can be only the world that has been regenerated into a perfect state. True religion never tries to sever man from the world in the closest connection with which God has created him. Together with the transformation of his natural side nature too around him will be transformed, so that it can serve him and he can rule it. Eternal life also is not regarded as an absolute absorption in God, who needs nothing else than Himself, but on account of His love has created a world and man to exercise dominion over it. In the new world the saints are to serve God and to govern the world. Only in this way is a life

secured for them, which in its receptive and its active phases is in reality a continuation of the association with all those who attain to the same goal, which, because it no longer knows of sin, is eternal and imperishable, as is God Himself. To this final consummation the religion of the New Testament hopefully looks.

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